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Fall 1987 Vol. 9 No. 2

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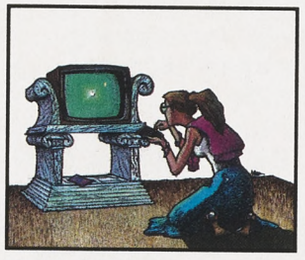
FALL 1987

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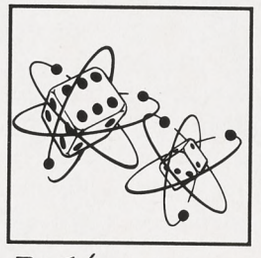
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Cover Illustration by Debra Landau. The Mayan calendar—an extinct culture's datebook credited with predicting the New Age

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El Paso Cantina
mexican restaurant

The 4 O'Clock Booze

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Pulling away from CSULB, I instinctively flicked on the radio. A 10 year old was praising a "rad" show about two private-eye brothers. I can't remember the last time a pre-teen said anything intelligent or enlightening, so I switched stations, only to catch a senior citizen raving about the same show. This woman actually likes the news at 5, 6 and 7 so you can tell she leads an exciting life.

Shaking my head in dismay, I tapped in a tape and punched the pedal. After a drowsy day at State it was time to wake up and suck down a margarita. Time to party, Jack.

An afficionado of the tangy lime frozen beverage, I proceeded to El Paso Cantina for sustenance and substance.

Hemingway might scoff at El Paso's pink exterior. But if you want a refreshingly strong drink, you look past the physical structure and at personable service.

I hit the bar with the force of Sylvester Stallone and the style of Sting. Passing two goddesses disguised as hostesses, I sauntered up the stairs to the oyster bar.

A feast of international dishes crowded two banquet tables, dominating the dance floor. I started feeling good. I started gaining confidence. I started getting hungry.

Quickly ordering a margarita, I strode over and filled two plates with enough to feed Joe Mama & Joe Papa. With well-drinks only $1.25 and double margs for the price of singles, I was in happy-hour heaven.

By 7pm my student entourage arrived. Laughter abounded and drinks flowed. Dinner downstairs was now in order; like children at Christmas we departed and descended.

A booth was made ready and we were made welcome. I ordered the Texas Platter in honor of Baby Jessica's rescuers and a Corona in honor of the cooks. For under 7 bucks, I enjoyed shredded beef enchiladas, chicken fajitas, quesadillas, guacamole, jalapeños and refried beans. This is the life!

After the stomach-satisfying supper, We mosied upstairs for another round to the tunes of a five man top-40 ensemble playing in the oyster bar. Dancing people had replaced the appetizer tables. We pounded some drinks and pounded the dance floor. In great spirits, our group grew larger and friendlier. For a change of pace, we ventured into the disco.

Terminator-type door hosts scanned our IDs and waved us through. The music bounced and swirled as we scampered in.

Surveying the huge room filled with beautiful women and handsome men, we knew we belonged. GI Joe was spinning tunes and blonde Barbies were spinning skirts—I stopped spinning my wheels.

My cohorts in consumption and I ordered that night's special, an Iced tea, then grabbed a table as command post. Kamikazes debuted for our toast to the good life. I danced, drank and made new friends for the rest of the evening.

At 1:30, I bid farewell to my cantina compadres, phone numbers bulging in my pockets. Starting my truck, I clicked on the radio only to hear grandma again, so I dropped in my favorite tape and headed home. Students of life should experience as much socializing as possible before saying "adios amigos" to this planet. That pretty pink palace in Marina Pacifica Mall is—like the Army says—a great place to start.

UNIVERSITY Magazine

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Editor's Note

Yes Virginia, there is a CSULB magazine.

In the University Watch section, Rich Mannino, a normally placid individual, comes out against the smuttiness of our foreign policy. George didn't cross the Potomac to give rise to such meretricious behavior. (Our not-for-print nickname for his story: "Slutmuffins Across the Potomac.") And Michel Shehadeh recounts his arrest and 23-day detention, the only apparent explanation for his arrest—his birth in Palestine. The secrecy with which we conduct policies affecting foreigners on our soil and on theirs suggests these many activities are illegal. Both stories reveal a miscarriage of justice—defacers of our Constitution go scott-free while immigrants with the "wrong" country of national origin languish in prison's limbo.

Speaking of Scott Free, you'll meet him in Mark Mulqueeney's feature article inspired by his arrest for outstanding traffic warrants. (Poor Scott Free—he stole a purse, returned it, was forgiven by his victim, yet the system sentenced him to 60 days in county jail.) Despite all odds, Mark's knack for finding humor in any aspect of life didn't abandon him behind bars.

In our theme segment we embark on a quest to learn more about this New Age we are living in. Bruce Fordyce tunes into the revival of the Bananadine culture, "the hippies had it right...." Chris Callard takes a witty, informative look at the Harmonic Convergence's roots. Mary Ann De Gree reports on the healing powers of crystals. Brian Hall investigates the metaphysical underpinnings of this New Age. And Peggy Haynes interviews Jeremy Tarcher, publisher of New Age books long before the phrase "New Age" was coined. Rachel Heller's glossary of critical terms should help us understand the New Age lingo. Now, when a friend says she "projected onto the Astral Plane through her Third Eye," you'll know what she's talking about.

For avid TV viewers, we present Teresa McGraa's tale of a soap opera junkie gone haywire.

A morose story of a daughter mourning her father's premature death rounds out this issue.

Jane

A special thanks goes to our illustrators and artists. Mary Pagone deserves distinction for performance beyond the call of sanity.

Debra Landau—the cover
Prescott Chow—A Virulent Case of Potomac Fever
Sara Leventhal—Rude Awakening
Roger Mejia—Scared Silly
Mary Pagone—Tune In, Turn On, And...
Anthony Paular—Quarks of Nature & Soundtrack for the New Age
Kimberly Blair—Mayans to the Rescue
Loren Knowles—Trading Vices



Art by Prescott Chow

A Virulent Strain of Potomac Fever

by Richard Mannino

Ollie North. You remember, he's the fellah who won the hearts and minds of so many Americans during last summer's Iran-Contra hearings in Washington D.C. In a few short weeks he went from obscure company man to patriotism incarnate.

"It was a neat idea," he said of diverting funds to the Contras. On the surface many couldn't argue—sandbagging the Ayatollah and his merry gang; using them as pawns to finance the Contra road-show in Nicaragua. Iranian cash paying for the overthrow of those cardboard liberators, the Sandinistas. And the cost to you and me? A few missiles, a cake and a Bible. We might even have gotten our hostages back. Ah yes, American ingenuity moving and shaking the world.

Could all this scheming be too good to be true? You bet. As the facts surfaced, it became apparent the Iran-Contra plan was an idiotic policy doomed from the start. Under U.S. law, the diversion was illegal, but the diversion, as well as Ollie North, seem to be only the tip of a worldwide iceberg of covert operations run by sleazy operatives in the name of "national security."

Accusations of this sort aren't new, and last summer's congressional hearings didn't delve deeply into them but other hearings have. In 1975, the Senate Intelligence committee told of 10 years of direct U.S. harassment of Chile's Salvador Allende and of our role in overthrowing his democratically elected government. The scale of involvement was "by no means unprecedented," according to the committee.

Magazine stories, newspaper accounts, and books have detailed similar wrongdoings over the past few decades. *Wall Street Journal* reporter Jonathan Kwitny's new book, *The Crimes of Patriots*, describes various present and former military and CIA personnel as deeply involved with drug smugglers and swindlers. And now a group called the Christic Institute, a "law and public policy center" which worked on the Karen Silkwood case, has filed a lawsuit under the Racketeer Influenced and Corrupt Organizations Act naming 29 people, including General Richard Secord and ex-CIA officials Theodore Shackley and Thomas Clines, as executors of 25 years of secret operations.

The accusations include not only subverting the Nicaraguan government, but negotiating illegal arms deals in the Middle East, helping the Shah of Iran assassinate political opponents, and overthrowing Allende's government. Many of these covert operations were allegedly financed by worldwide drug sale profits.

The consequences of unaccountable covert operations are serious. They undermine this country's very foundation by abusing our democratic system, a system with checks and balances. Secret strategies evading these checks facilitate change on a shortsighted basis.

Overthrowing Allende after his election led to military rule under Pinochet. Pinochet's refusal to loosen his iron-grip on Chile has forced us to push him for democratic reforms and free elections.

By training the Shah's secret police we perpetuated a repressive regime. The setting was ripe for the Ayatollah who took Americans hostage and delights in humiliating this country. Iran's spreading revolution in the Middle East has led to more hostage taking. In-

creased instability has resulted from our selling them weapons. Today we have the largest naval contingent since the Vietnam war cruising the Persian Gulf—"maintaining order."

These operations weren't hidden merely to preserve their questionable political objectives—they concealed personal greed. Clines overcharged the Pentagon $8 million while shipping weapons to Egypt. And the Iran-Contra hearings revealed only $3.5 million of the $31 million raised ever reached the Contras. Clines, Secord, and business partner Albert Hakim (who admitted during the hearings that profit was his main motive) took $3.8 million for themselves. Secord testified he never meant to keep the money, but then why does he still have it—saving for a rainy Contra day? The Contras needed every penny immediately, isn't that the diversion's raison d'être?

What we faithful American citizens have ended up with is two governments executing policy—one based on the principle of government of, by, and for the people, and one created behind the scenes to circumvent our laws, under the guise of "national security." We're playing with fire.

Once the adrenaline pumping rah-rah spirit subsides, the unfettered reality of secret operations becomes apparent. People are getting killed in the name of profit and patriotism, and this country's values are getting dragged through the mud. The ends don't justify the means, or this would be the Soviet Union. The irony abounds.

It's a rot pervading the American power structure—national ambition's dark side rearing its ugly head. We have a say in this that we need to use more intelligently. Basing votes on rhetoric or special interests creates an I'll-get-mine-first-and-then-we'll-talk condition which perpetuates a secret society of war-mongers.

Our founding fathers were pretty smart, and it's no accident our constitution is the longest surviving constitution around. They knew bullshit when they saw it, hence all those checks and balances and guarantees of expressing ideas. They weren't perfect, but they weren't directing secret wars either. It's about time the powers that be realize that we, the American people, don't need to be spoon-fed our foreign policy. Only our president does.

The next time our government considers intervening in another country—chuck politics aside—give the American people the real facts. If our collective ire is raised, then let's send in the Marines and hit 'em with everything we've got. If the Norths, Secords, Clines, and Shackleys of this world are the only men interested in the job, we should stay the hell out. If men of their ilk are still around when the real battle begins, they can fight alongside the rest of us—not before. ✎

Richard Mannino spends his free time listening to ZZ Top and dreaming of a career as a tabloid headline writer.

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Rude Awakening

By Michel Shehadeh

"Daddy," Ibrahim, my three-year-old son was saying. "Can I sleep in your bed tonight? Please?"He repeated his favorite line before going to bed.

"No, you are sleeping in your nice bed. Mommy and Daddy will sleep in theirs," I replied, fighting an urge to say yes. Detecting the determination in my voice, he retreated to his second position."Can I then come and wake you in the morning?" This meant sneaking into my bed as soon as Maxine, my wife, leaves for work at six o'clock. With a kiss, I assured him he could.

Ibrahim and I were sleeping, when a persistent knock woke me up. I went to the front door. A woman and two men, dressed alike in professional attire, stood behind the door.

"Yes?" I asked, not able to hide the displeasure in my voice.

"We are from the Immigration and Naturalization Service," the woman said with a slight smile.

"We just want to talk to you," one man added.

I thought I detected nervousness in his voice. Pushing the thought aside, I edged the door open. They probably want to ask me some questions about my application for naturalization.

A violent shove against the door sent me flying backwards. Over ten agents surged into my living room from their hiding places outside. Several seized me, sending rushes of pain throughout my body, as they forced my hands behind my back.

Other agents spread through the house in Dirty Harry style, shouting, "Where are the weapons? Where are the weapons?"

Was this really happening, or was I lost in a nightmare? When I saw Ibrahim enter the living room, screaming and frantically searching for me, I knew this was not a dream. Rage welled up in me; my frustration at being unable to help my son hurting more than the agent's grip.

"Can anyone explain to me what the hell is going on here?" I shouted, trying to squirm free.

"Calm down. Relax." came a dry reply.

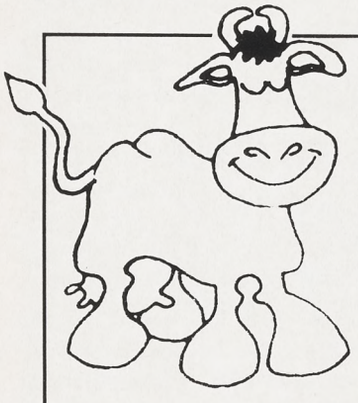
"You are under arrest," the agent in charge declared. "You belong to a terrorist organization."

"This must be a mistake," I replied.

He didn't listen. Iinstead, he signaled to the agents holding me and strode away. I felt cold metal clamping down my wrists.

"Where are they taking you Daddy?" Ibrahim cried out, as I was dragged from my home. Outside, a helicopter hovered overhead. Tense battle-ready uniformed cops, anticipating confrontation, milled around my driveway. As I was driven away, my neighbors' eyes reflected my confusion—piercing my back as we drove off in the early morning fog. (Luckily, one of my neighbors volutarily took charge of Ibrahim—otherwise he would have been left all alone.)

Locked inside a glass-walled room



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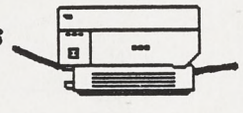
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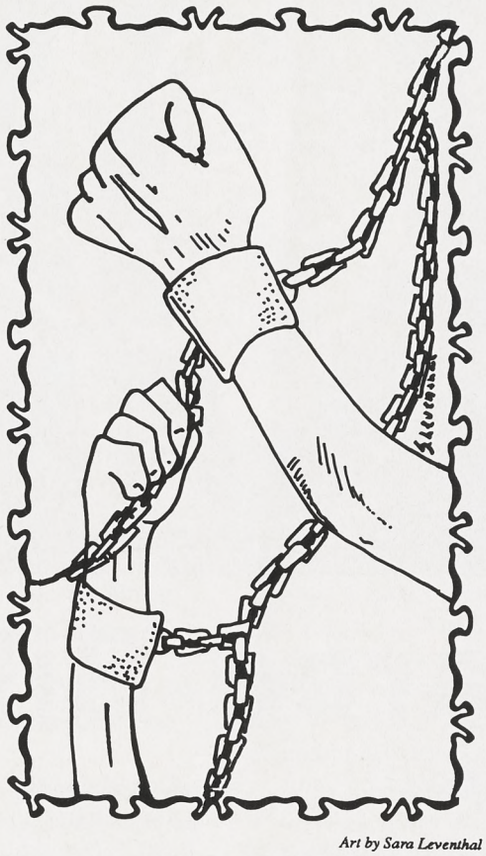
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U-WATCH

at the Parker Center, I tried to fathom what had just happened. A mysterious early morning raid; a hoard of government agents; the INS ... what did all this mean? Why had I been singled out for this treatment? What did I do?

Suddenly, I saw someone I recognized being brought in, followed by another familiar person and yet another. Soon we were six. (Eventually, we would number eight—the Los Angeles Eight.) How many more were being held elsewhere? Confused and angry, we were finger-printed, photographed, shackled hand and foot with 45-pound weights strapped on our ankles. None of us knew why we were here, but all of us felt a strong bond. Talking about our plight, we tried to find a common thread between us. We were all living in Southern California, pursuing the American dream. Three of us were CSULB students, one owned a construction firm, one worked in a store, the other was a salesman—we were all Palestinians.

After being held all day, without food or water, we were transported to San Diego. No one we encountered offered us any kindness, not even a cigarette. We were pariahs.



Art by Sara Leventhal

Deemed a national security risk, we were transferred to Terminal Island Federal Prison. For the next 23 days, divided into pairs, we were confined in maximum security cells measuring six by ten feet. Each day we spent 23 hours inside the "coop" with only one hour's worth of "recreation" in the barbed-wire court. For me, an hour of fresh air was just a tease; a reminder of the freedom we lost.

The six of us were isolated from the other inmates. Our only contact with fellow humans restricted to our cell-mates and our guards. During the day, my cell-mate and I entertained each other with all the riddles and jokes we could dredge up from our memories; we sang all the songs we knew, and hummed the rest.

Prior to our arrival, the guards must have been told they were receiving a contingent of terrorists; they were prepared for the Night Stalker. We were treated more heinously than the seasoned criminals. "Get up camel jockeys!" was our wake-up call. "Eat your breakfast, sand niggers!" was their ap-

Continued on page 42

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Art by Roger Mejia

Scared Silly

By Mark Mulqueeney

Royal blue and crimson red lights bounced and danced off the back of the apartment buildings as I was read my rights.

"Do you understand these rights?"

"But I'm going to France!" I pleaded towards the officer leaning lazily against the patrol car, arms folded.

"Not anymore," chided the other cop. "Looks like you'll be vacationing behind bars for awhile."

This can't be happening. Here it is, hours before takeoff and I get taken in. Where are my guardian angels when I need them? The ones with the wings, not the red-bereted Hitler Youth.

The sound of the door slamming, me sitting with wrists aching really made me realize the reality of the situation, real fast. I'd never been handcuffed; well, not by the police anyway, and it's no limbo dance, especially in the back of a squad car.

Ignoring their remarks about my trip to Paris, my mind wondered and wandered about how to get out of this one. No answers arose, no solutions solidified, no bueno mi amigo and before long, the police station materialized.

A beautiful shade of mold-green scratch-and-sniff paint greeted my eyes after being "limboed down" out of the city vehicle. With Officer John Law flanking my right and Officer Bob from the coloring books on my left, we entered another world, a world of black magic, a world of Darwinism, a world of seclusion.

A salty haired sergeant, gingerly sipping a Jumbo Java, slouched behind the towering oak booking desk as my entourage strode in. Discomfort descended as Sergeant Bookemdanno glared over the arrest sheet and down on me. I never understood why booking desks were designed with Kareem Abdul-Jabbar in mind. Standing silently in front of it, I felt small, very small.

"So, you were going to Paris?"

"Yes sir," I replied stepping forward, "and if I could make a phone call, I might still make my flight."

"Stand over there boy," he growled.

If I could have sarcastically saluted, I would have. As it was, I mumbled, "yes sir," and shuffled over, subdued. A red stripe in front of the bench warned me not to pass, so I dropped, squishing my wrists against the wall. Squirming to get comfortable, much like in church, I proceeded in only making myself more miserable, again, much like in church. I concluded that by slipping my hands under my gluteus maximus, down my lower limbs and past my pods I'd be sitting pretty. Literally, not figuratively. As I started to slip, Officer Bob advanced and advised, "Don't even think about it."

Having already thought about it, I felt a small victory over the coloring book cop but also scared as hell. Sitting, sighing and shaking, I waited for further instructions.

Jail. I'd never been to the slammer, but luckily I'd seen the prison documentary, "Scared Straight" and the sequel, "Ten Years Later," so I had that going for me, which was nice. Looking down on my clothes, much like the sergeant, I assessed my appearance. Black pullover sweatshirt, faded indigo jeans, white hightops and two days stubble to prove my pubidity. Okay gangsters, killers, rapists and DMV delinquents like myself, I'm ready.

The scarfaced soldier in *Platoon* had nothing on Officer Law as he yelled me through booking. A series of finger

paintings, picture takings and clothes rakings made up the "booking bash." The big finale? A ride in the elevator with my two abductors.

"Third floor, fossil fuels," I announced as the doors closed.

"Shut up Parisboy," they responded in unison.

These guys were no fun.

Jerking to a halt on Level 3, the elevator's doors slid open. I would have preferred Level 42, but the only music I heard that night was the whine of men gone bad, cops included. Uncuffed and put in a tiny cell alone, I noticed the lovely lime green paint rearing it's ugly hue on these walls as well. Benches rode around three sides of the room, the fourth, solid bars. I quickly made like a couch potato in the back corner.

Pulling my knees up to my lips, I couldn't believe I was sitting in jail. I should've been wondering if I'd reach LAX before rush hour, but no—I'm incarcerated in a concrete cave.

Around 6 a.m. a playmate arrived. Slinking in was a Hells Angels' reject which is kind of redundant. Shoulder-length, sweat-greased curls crowned my heavily bearded buddy as he stretched across the opposite bench. Stealing glances and weighing my chances occupied my sight and mind while I remained in close proximity to this Charles Manson mutant. I must have looked like Don Knotts, because every time Chuck glanced my way, he laughed. The same laugh I make when confronted with Mr. Limpett's face. This could be a long stay, I surmised as Helter Skelter-face laughed, a very long stay.

"Alright assholes! Breakfast."

Breakfast came at 6:30 and was run by other inmates. Our "waiter," definitely the ugliest specimen I'd met so far, state employees included, pulled out two trays. Compared to his face, the food didn't look that bad. Runny, half-cooked scrambled eggs, black burnt bacon and cold cloudy coffee became Sunday brunch in Santa Barbara compared to Mr. Potatohead. I noticed the other servers had an affinity to the "tater'd" look as well.

Our trays were kicked under the bars and Mr. Personality, my cell mate, grabbed his food with the moves of a trap door spider. I, on the other hand, attacked my tray with the finesse of Gerald Ford, tripping, falling and spilling all the way back to the bench. I'd just lost my first prison fight to a lousy plastic tray.

"4673654, stand up! Hey Parisboy, that means you!"

I jumped up, praying my brother had made bail. The clock behind my announcer read 8:30 a.m.

"You're being moved."

Officer Bob took the lead as we headed down the corridor. These guys put a big dent in the slime green paint supply. East LA's got to be up in arms over this.

At the end of the hall I stopped, which, considering the hardness and roughness of the wall, was smart. There, the doors and my eyes were opened, meeting for the first time the criminal element. Men who had "lynched" laws, dabbled in danger, reveled in rebellion and feigned amnesia for moving violations.

It was then I started smoking. I remember it well. A humungous Neanderthal shoved a cigarette and lighter in my face.

"Smoke," he said.

Not wanting to offend the one-man welcome wagon, I lit the short cig, my moustache, eyebrows and hair. Everybody laughed at my Richard Pryor imitation, deputies included. Singed and still smoking, I walked away, thanking Pyro Pete for the cancer stick.

I made my way to the phone and fumbled for funds. A hand fell firmly on my shoulder. Through burned brows, I detected a dredlocked dragon in army fatigues smiling and waving his free hand to clear the smoke.

"Homeboy, you wanna maka call?"

I nodded.

"Shit, hold your cash, I'll make it fo' a dime."

What the hell, I'm already in jail. So I handed him the change.

He started pressing numbers, grinning like Michael Jordan with his tongue hanging sideways. This guy definitely has a future with the Postal Service stamp-licking squad.

"Okay, when yo hear a tone, dial yo number."

"Cell"-ular Sprint behind bars. I don't think this is what Pac-Tel had in mind. My first call went to my brother's answering machine and I did something different for a change. I left a message. Relinquishing to Rasta Rambo another silver piece, I placed a second call to the airlines.

"Hello Pan Am? I won't be able to make my flight this morning. I'd like to change it to Thursday. Yes, LA to Paris. Ten a.m. Thursday? Thank you."

Breathing a sigh of relief, I turned around and suddenly felt like Pee Wee Herman in a pool hall. All eyes were on this "new arrival" and the silence was heavy with fatty foreboding. Clearing my throat, I swaggered back to my spot unaccosted.

"Hey homeboy, you goin' ta Paris?"

Smiling sadly, I nodded. All thirty eyes stared quietly, the foreboding obese by now.

"Paris, France? What the fuck you doin' here?!"

Laughter broke out. My "captive" audience found my travel plans quite amusing and I smiled from peer pressure.

"Homeboy, whatcha in fo'?"

I mumbled incoherently, which is kind of redundant.

"Whadja say?"

"Traffic ... ."

"What's dat, Parisboy?"

"I killed a cop."

Boy, you should have seen the guys when I said that! Respect filled the cell like a bad odor and I was immediately left alone. After several curious stares directed my way, I could read their thoughts. How could a guy with the build of a coatrack snuff out one of the city's finest?

To clear the air of all this bad respectability, I came clean.

"No, really I got picked up on traffic warrants."

Nobody—but yours truly—laughed. Again I was left alone, only this time the guys didn't stare, or care.

Remember coming back from vacation or illness or in some cases both and everybody asks how it was? Here on the third floor of Cellblock "C" the same thing happened. The most asked question is, "So, what are you in for?" Sitting on the cold concrete floor, back against the bars, with the morning sun dimly lighting up the glazed glass, I listened to my colleagues in crime answer.

"Purse snatching."

"Grand theft."

"Assault and Battery."

"Indecent exposure."

"Dealing Crack."

"Buying Smack."

"I messed up my ol' lady."

Hitting a woman is looked down upon in prison, as it is in society, which I find commendable.

Variations and combinations of those dastardly deeds swirled through my virgin ears. Listening to all the banter, I realized that "Parisboy" had sole ownership to "first timer." Jail is their life; freedom, a vacation; prison, their career. A sobering thought for my average mind.

Around 9:30 (I can only guess since watches were taken upon entering this "rehab resort") a snack cart rolled up. Buying a pack of manly Marlboros and a beef stick, I contemplated the term "doing time." In prison, the tendency to turn into a human Swatch watch is almost inevitable. Thought-provoking questions like: "How long have I been here," and "When will I get out?" screamed like banshees in my head.

The shuffling of feet, the tinkling of keys and numerous expletives, took me out of my Timex trance. Names were called, prisoners lined up, my tired body included. As we gathered against the bars I asked Don, an older incarcerate, where we were going. Don had decided early that I needed watching over; someone to "show me the chains." Don said we were going to court. We walked single file and passed between two guards, where handcuffs found a home on our wrists; the boys of section "C" marched into battle. Looking up and down the row of men, I mused, "So this is a chaingang."

The deputies herded us into the elevator. "Moos" and "baas" echoed loudly as the doors shut. Deodorant seemed a luxury, not a necessity to these men, cops included.

"Alright assholes, everybody out!"

Instructed to follow a yellow line down the tunnel connecting the jail to the courthouse, we headed off. Our path was long and poorly lit, which boded well for the green paint. Walking and clinking down the hall, I noticed no guards were in sight. Someone else realized this and broke into song:

"There she was, justa walkin' down the street."

To which everybody laughed and sang back,

"Singin' do wa diddy, diddy dum, diddy do."

Suprisingly, I loosened up and started the second verse:

"Snappin' her fingers and a shufflin' her feet."

"Singin' do wa diddy, diddy dum, diddy do."

"She looks goo... ."

"Cut that crap out!"

Again we laughed; smiles of camaraderie went around. Pledges in the Hell Weekend of life. I felt like a hostage, who after living with his kidnappers begins to side with them. The Patty Hearst of speeding violations; similar build, too.

"Alright assholes, stop at the door, get against the wall."

I was then introduced to the female persuasion of a prisoner. As the women, and I use the term loosely, as they do, passed by a guy yelled, "How much?"

One girl made a gesture often seen on freeways during rush hour—breaking up the linked, lewd dudes, deputies included.

After the "ladies" went through the door, we goose-stepped our way to a waiting cell. Cuffs were taken and clothing shaken as we entered our new surroundings.

Another living-room sized cell, smartly designed with etched and scratched worn wooden benches hugging the walls. Fluorescent lighting nakedly baring its tubes was enough to take our eyes off the fungi-green concrete compartment. And in the far corner, squatting in at the height of two and a half feet, the indestructible, stainless-steel john.

Even though some time had passed since I relieved myself, I wasn't quite ready to bare my tubes.

"Okay guys, a lawyer will be here in a minute."

This was good news. Once I explained my predicament to the lawyer, Paris-bound but prison-tied, I'd be freed. My luck didn't hold. My heart fell and my spirit shattered as a used car salesman walked in wearing a powder blue leisure suit.

"Okay gang, I'm here to help. We'll go one at a time."

One by one, Cal Worthington took us on. With each case his only advice was, "Plead guilty and your time might be cut."

This went for Scott Free, the purse-snatcher who returned an old woman's bag without withdrawing the stolen cash. Scott, who had never stolen before, (he had been foodless two days straight but still knew it was wrong to steal) was told to plead guilty. I would think that if this lawyer sincerely had Scott's interest in mind, he could have gotten him off. A reprimand and directions to the nearest city shelter for a meal was what he needed. What he got was 60 days in County Jail. The senior citizen didn't even want to press charges and, in fact, gave Mr. Free five dollars to buy a burger.

"Okay assholes, let's go!"

Outside the cell we were given a quick massage and connecting bracelets.

Led into the crowded court via a side door, I felt ashamed for the first time in this ordeal. With no sleep, shirt soiled and wrinkled, prickly chin under blood shot eyes—one of the Dirty Dozen, or in our case, the Filthy Fifteen, who sat in the back two rows, waiting for Judge Dread. As Rusty the bailiff droned on, I searched for my brother. None of the faces looked familiar or related, which made my chest burst and deflate. Dejectedly, I listened to the judge, knowing I was on my way to "the rock," not the Louvre.

Each case went something like this:

The monked minister of misdemeanors read the standing defendant's misdeeds. Asked how he pleaded, guilty, five days in County. Asked how long he'd been in so far, two days, three days in County left to serve. Most had been in for the whole weekend or at least part of it, so in a twisted way, Cal was right about the reduced time.

Finally my number was called; I rose to listen to my car crimes come public.

"Three warrants. 55 m.p.h. in a 30 m.p.h. zone. Illegal right turn, failure to yield to a pedestrian. Illegal U-turn across double yellows with an open container."

As Rusty read, out of the corner of my eye I could see the pledges smiling. They all identified with the beer part, but what stuck was the pedestrian bit—prisoners hate pedestrians. So the gang thought I was okay, the Mad Max of LA, as it were.

"How do you plead?"

"Guilty, sir."

"Five days in County. How many days so far, son?"

"What time is it, sir."

"11:30."

"About eight hours, sir."

Looking up from his papers, he was dumbfounded at the short amount of time I'd been in, considering my appearance.

"But it feels like eight weeks, sir."

Breaking up everybody in court, judge included.

As I sat back down, the guys that could slapped my shoulder. Don just shook his head.

We were escorted out after everyone got sentenced; I felt like a dangling modifier.

What happened to my brother?
What happened to family loyalty?
What happened to lunch? I could spend time in County and come out a bitter, angry man.
The Charles Bukowski of the future.

The suffocating holding cell quickly got as hot and stuffy as a locker room in August. Smuggled cigarettes came out and went for two bits. Our area filled with a grey haze, much like Los Angeles, only smaller. There was a phone, but the amount of beef huddled around Ma Bell made my quest for freedom rather risky.

"Just what the fuck are you doin' homeboy?!"

"I'd like to get out of here."

"Yeah, he's goin' to Paris."

Wow, with friends like that to back me up, who needs a face? Quickly freeing two cigarettes from my pack, I shoved them at Mondo and hand-wrapped the receiver simultaneously. Ma Bell's boys had intimidated everyone against using the phone, but I caught them off guard with my attitude and Marlboros...mostly Marlboros. I called my brother and left a short message: "Get me outta here!"

I left our lifeline to the outside world, thanked the assembled Crips, and I strode away. I have Lifeline service at home, but in here it takes on a whole different meaning.

Don, with a "short" clenched between his teeth, decided to tell me who I had just bothered.

"That guy killed three people in a rival gang."

"Oh," I said, eyes as big as Buckwheats. "He seemed like an okay guy to me."

"Homeboy," a Mexican Mr. T. said, "nobody here is okay."

Those words were reverberating in my ears as Don got up, stretched and turned to me saying, "watch my back."

He then walked over to the silver-metaled commode. Sitting on the bench watching Don, I mulled over what the meaning of the word "trust" was in prison. I guess the term "trust" is about as rare as an original Joe Biden quote.

"Alright assholes, let's go, line up!"

I guesstimated the time at 6 p.m. when we walked out and buckled up for safety before boarding the bus. Images of Richard "The Night Stalker" Ramirez and Sean "Bad Boys" Penn clouded my vision under greying skies. They must be mistaken, I'm supposed to get out of here. Where's my bro? Where's my friends? Where's my pardon? I want to be delivered, not deflowered!



Art by Roger Mejia

The bus ride was more like a junior high field trip. Girls in the front, guys in the back, Top 40 music in between as we lumbered and bounced up the freeway. By the time we unloaded, it was 7 p.m.

"Now this is where the fun starts," Don said pessimistically.

I walked in, a piece of American cheese, ready to be processed. Another group waited in front of us. They must've called ahead and made reservations.

"Alright assholes, get against the walls!"

Deputies stood center-stage, each directing his attention to a section of men.

"Shoes and socks off. Face the wall and spread 'em!"

Four searches in one day? These cops sure are frisky, I mused while being wriggled and rifled. I almost wanted a menthol after they finished, which kind of worried me.

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Tune In, Turn On and ...

By Bruce Fordyce

When Sidney, the degenerate who used to slip LSD into my milk during lunch break and razored my head into a Darby Crash special while I slept, announced he'd traded in his copy of the *Anarchist Cookbook* for a paperback on consciousness discovery, I was mildly amused. But when my old stomping mate, Diana Boredom, changed her name to Moon Child, I knew something was going on.

Sidney was the Ayatollah of Punkola, the Sir Lancelot of Central California's roundtable of chemical-abusing destructoids, and the Diana I remember was about as spiritual as a tabby on Demerol.

As uneighties like as this may sound, Sid and Diana's switches are not uncommon incidents. There's an increasing number of spiritual movements inflaming the bowels of California youth and pop culture. Good, wholesome, self-mutilating, anarchy-burger punk rockers, and other youth groups, are aligning themselves with geriatric, out-of-retirement Aquarians and bonding into a neo-Sixties spiritual movement, which author Marilyn Ferguson calls "The Aquarian Conspiracy." But the big question on my mind is: "Is this truly a grass roots movement or simply another big business, media-created fad designed to line capitalist pockets by selling us tons of useless junk?

So after receiving an urgent request from Sidney, I set out on a spiritual-discovery journey to find out just what is going on. I contemplated the consequences associated with any contact with Sid, shrugged it off as journalistic risk, extorted mom's limit from Versatel, packed up some tie-dyed shirts, a pair of Birkenstocks, two twelvers of Schaefer, and then hitchhiked north.

Sid's postcard begged repeated and analytic readings. It was simplistic yet desperate, brilliant yet confused, but obvi-



Art by Mary Pagone

Dig Out Mom's Old Tie-dyed Shirts

ously written by someone on the verge of either a long padded-room incarceration or a major discovery.

Dear Cosmic Comrade,

Thou journalistic bitcheness is sorely missed and really required. This story must be told. We've figured it out, me ladee, we had it all wrong. Violence is passé, the key is in the mind not the body. Bring thy confused head to us and discover the real truth, what they've been hiding. The Hippies had it right man, they just didn't have Bananadine! Hurry! Hurry! Hurry!

Your cosmic buddy in the sky,

Syd

Now this postcard could mean only one of three things: Sidney's summers spent at the Tough Love camps paid off, he had sniffed one tube of glue too many, or he was onto something. I had my doubts, but the Geraldo in me kept nagging "go for it, dude. . . like, be passionate towards your life."

"Hey, you low-life piece of dog vomit," I screamed upon arrival at his peace sign-graffitied apartment (this is how old punkers say hello).

"What's goin' on," I asked. "What are the hot plans for tonight? We gonna beer bong Schaefer until we upchuck, skateboard through parking lots setting off car alarms, or socialize with morally questionable women?"

"Naaaa," said a surprisingly relaxed Sid, "we're going to a skinning party."

"A what?"

"A skinning party. It's where we scrape the insides of banana peels, boil, bake, and then smoke them."

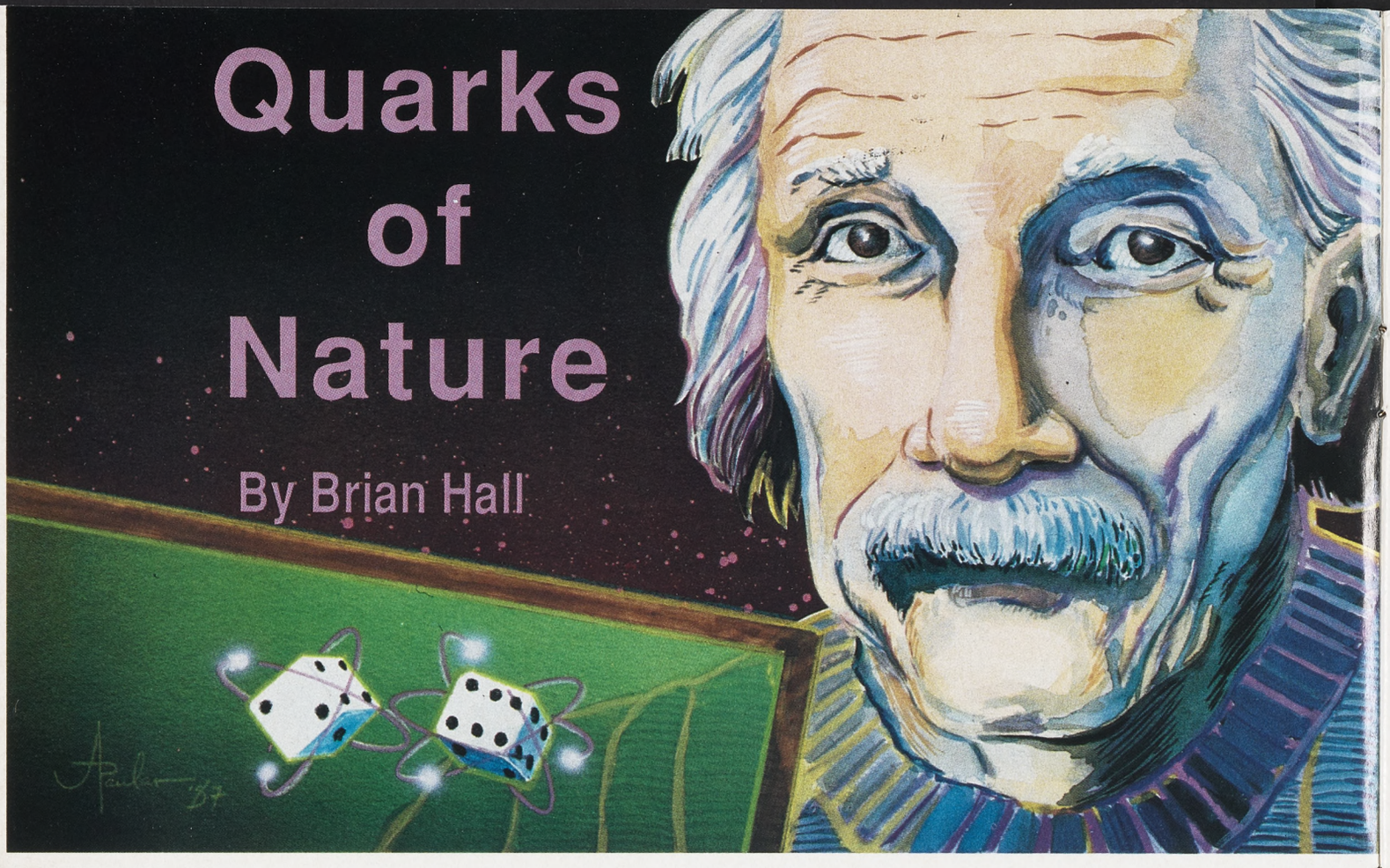
"Chiquita crack?" I asked.

"No!" said Sid, adamantly. "Bananadine is not a drug, it's a key to the consciousness which works when used with the perception deprivation tank" (a bathtub filled with warm

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Quarks of Nature

By Brian Hall



Did you ever wonder how Captain Kirk could travel millions of miles in a single *Star Trek* episode? How astronauts in the *Planet of the Apes* movies could lie in suspended animation, never aging until their rocket reached its destination? How the cleavage between science and mysticism could be bridged? Or, to bring it down to the here and now, how reasonable and intelligent men and women could join what is loosely called the New Age movement? The theories of Einstein and quantum physics take these questions out of the realm of science fiction and into the galaxy of possibility.

When Albert Einstein and J. Robert Oppenheimer began smashing and splitting reality at the subatomic level, the Newtonian division of energy and matter they sought was lost. Instead, they found a new connectedness, randomness, and subjectivity previously only expressed by Hindu mystics and Buddhist monks. What remained from the submicroscopic wreckage of high velocity Newtonian physics, many thought, more resembled paradoxical Zen koans than hard and fast results of the scientific method.

In the fourth and fifth centuries, Chinese patriarchs sat on bamboo mats asking their students brain twisters. "What is the sound of one hand clapping? How does the one stand for the many and the many for the one? And how are the form and the void one and the same?"

Early in the twentieth century Albert Einstein, J. Robert Oppenheimer, Niels Bohr, and Werner Heisenberg leaned over electron microscopes and atom smashers, wondering how atoms could appear simultaneously as waves and particles, how other particles could look solid but have no mass, or have only a "tendency to exist," and atomic events only a "tendency to occur."

The Photoelectric Effect revealed, for example, that when ultraviolet light hit certain metals, it kicked out particles in a wave pattern, and Scattering Experiments in X-ray plates showed particles colliding in a trough-crest action—similar to the standing waves produced in the airstream of a flute or the strum of a sitar string. Under some experimental viewing conditions, only the particles appeared, and under others, only the waves.

In Western science's compartmentalizing, dualistic, dissecting mindset, the two forms loomed as irreconcilable opposites, but as Oppenheimer, the reluctant "father of the A bomb," explained, the lessons of quantum mechanics have a history in the West but a metaphysical basis in the East. New developments in physics served as "an exemplification, encouragement, and refinement of old wisdom."

Werner Heisenberg, another nuclear pioneer, seconded this notion. "For a parallel to the lessons of atomic theory we must turn to those kinds of epistemological problems with which thinkers like Buddha and Lao-tse have been confronted when trying to harmonize our position as spectators and actors in a great drama of existence."

Michael Faraday and James Clerk Maxwell charted this more unified Eastern course when they postulated the mechanism at work in the ultraviolet and X-ray experiments as yin-yang electromagnetic force fields interacting with matter, rather than unvarying, predetermined forces externally con-

Physical Foundations of the New Age

trolling objects, as Isaac Newton proposed. The new experimenters produced electricity by moving a magnet close to a copper coil, setting up an immediate reaction of positive and negative pull. The yin-yang energy tug caused a spark, illuminating a fresh direction in Western scientific thought. In physics as in Buddhism, opposites now complemented one another and were essential. Diversity, once shunned by Galileo, Copernicus and Newton, was now acknowledged as an intrinsic characteristic of all matter.

Galileo spent much of his life in jail for offending the faith of the Jesuit priests. He dared to suggest the earth doesn't stand center stage in the galaxy, and the solar system itself only supplies a dim backdrop to the universe. Next, Copernicus plugged the sun in as the key astronomical figure.

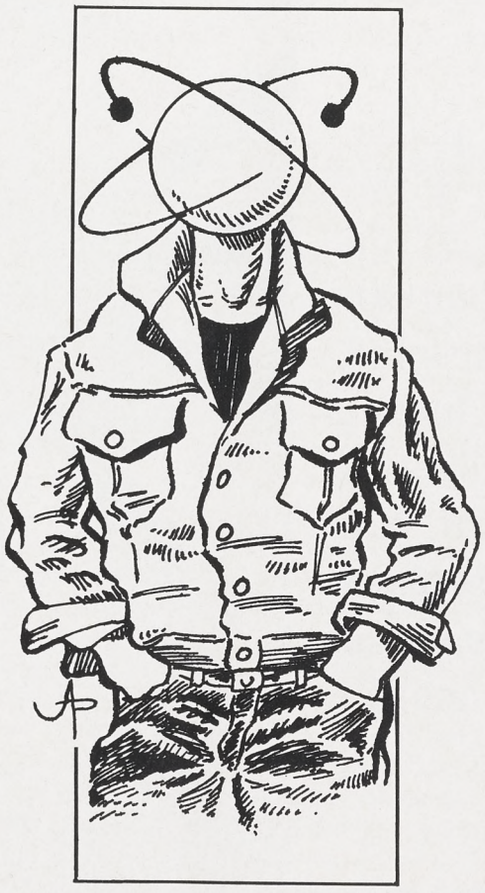
In the 1920s and 1930s, relativity and quantum theories allowed man to grab the spotlight. With the advent of nuclear fission and the subsequent atomic bombing of Japan at the close of World War II, humanity's new role was etched in charred craters. Concussion waves stifled all protest. And with the ideas behind the explosions, not only could man steal the atom's Promethean fire and call down his own Olympian lightning bolts, he could understand the true, ebb-and-flow, on-off, binary nature of reality.

In *The Tao of Physics*, Fritjof Capra, a physicist based at the University of California Berkeley, likened the attraction and repulsion of electrons around the atom's nucleus to the Hindu's "eternal dance of Shiva." Shiva, the cosmic dancer, whirls and pulsates in the unchoreographed rhythms of destruction and creation.

In a smaller minuet, Max Planck and Maxwell discovered the more tightly bound an electron is to its nucleus, the faster it accelerates, up to almost 40 thousand miles a second. Then when the electron nears the speed of light, it jumps unpredictably to an orbit farther from the nucleus.

At the time of this high-velocity hop, the electron emits a packet of energy Einstein termed "quanta." The mass of each electron constantly varies according to its relation to the speed of light. Planck's Constant states that location and momentum require separate calculations. Measuring momentum alters position and vice versa. This laid the foundation for the Heisenberg Uncertainty Principle: the most you can predetermine about the position and momentum of a particle is the minimum statistical uncertainty between the two.

Like rotating helicopter blades appearing as solid form, an object's illusion of solidity arises from particles spinning at 600 miles per second. The limited light spectra our eyes see conceal the continual flux of matter.



Quantum physics, unable to pry experimenter away from experiment sufficiently to render objective, predictable, and always reproducible results, caused Heisenberg to conclude that everything is subjective. Subject and object, actor and audience stay perpetually bound. The act of perceiving creates and alters reality. Where we stand in relation to the speed of light, the instruments and senses we use for analysis, and even our thoughts, determine what we see. No set reality exists because no two perceivers are identical.

In the 1930s the discovery of the neutron, a particle with self-neutralizing positive and negative charges, further muddied the waters of physics. The neutron's discovery confirmed what Hindus have always known intuitively as the "Middle Way." A neutron races and jumps like an electron or proton and behaves in such a way that lends credence to the medieval Christian mystic imagining a thousand angels dancing on the head of a pin.

Robert Derek uncovered positively charged anti-matter, which he speculated could reverse the atomic process. Manipulating protons and neutrons at the end of a light beam, Derek expected to observe fragmentation. Instead, by crashing protons and neutrons together, twice as many identical particles were produced, though after a millionth of a second, these particle twins vanished. Derek subsequently succeeded in creating particles from scratch by exciting pure energy. He created at will naturally occurring particles called quarks, currently the smallest known bits of matter.

Is the quark the elemental level, the underlying, indivisible structure to the universe? Scientists appear to think so, judging by the romantic nomenclature they employ when referring to these particles—truth, beauty, charm. Assigning noble characteristics to these massless particles reflects the experi-

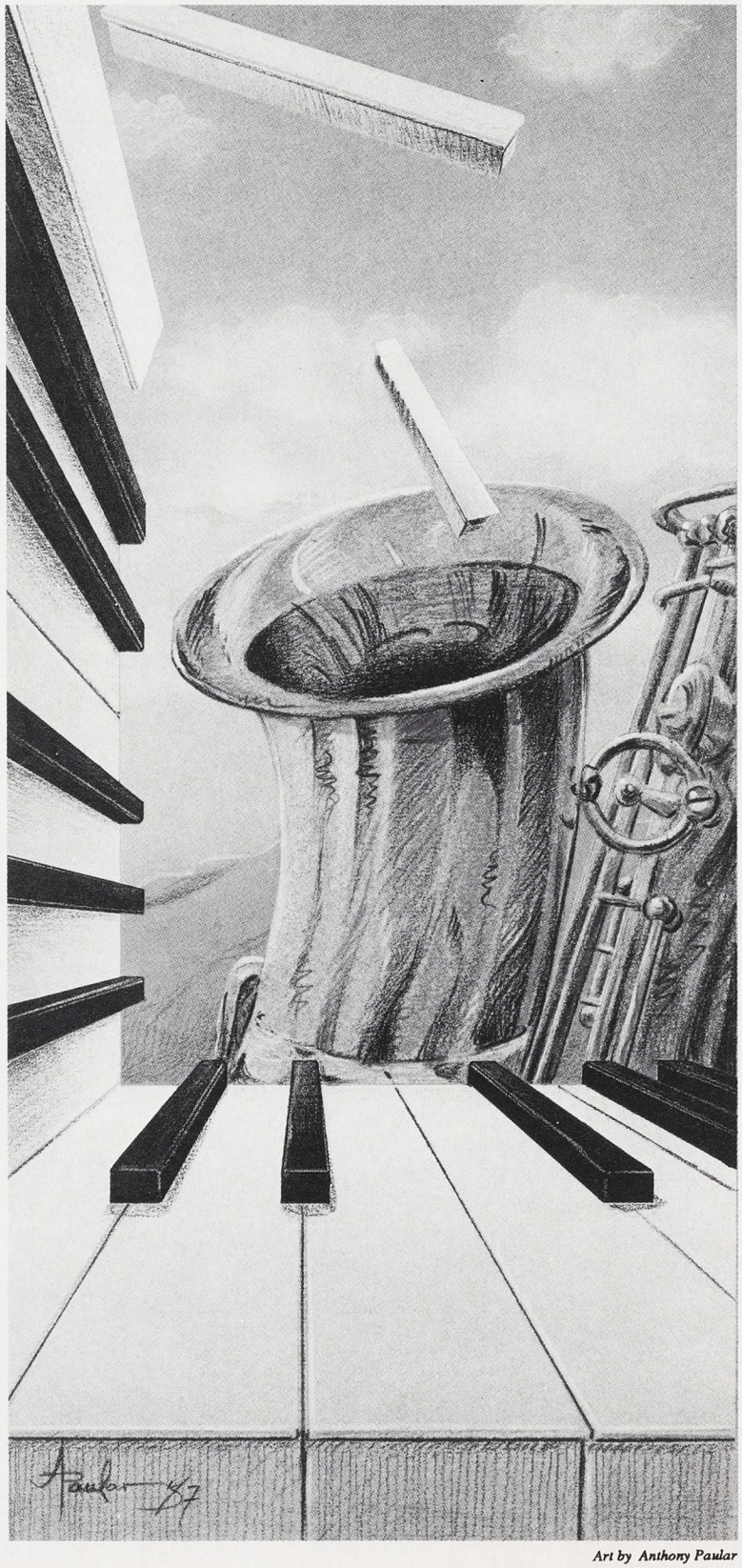
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Soundtrack for the New Age

By Sonya Shelton

Your finger gently pushes the button marked "play." Kitaro's *The Light of the Spirit* flows into your ears and sweeps over your mind. You close your eyes. In your head you see pictures—a wheat field, a waterfall. You hear a mysterious resonance ... perhaps from deep space. You escape into another world.

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Art by Anthony Paular

The world is New Age music. All nature is gust for its windmill. The absence of lyrics gives the listener a much wider range of associations, making it vividly visual music. To Anne Robinson, president of Windham Hill records, the most prominent New Age label, the term "New Age" means achieving an integrity in business, rejecting greed and exploitation, and returning to the antimaterialism of the Sixties.

Many associated with New Age say the term was first applied in music stores, so retailers would have a way to categorize this mix of jazz, classical and folk music. Consonance and harmony timed by floating pulses, rather than a beat, make for a soothing sound, one widely used by practitioners of Transcendental Meditation, Yoga and dozens of Eastern religious offshoots.

In fact, the musical category grew out of the exotic East-West meditation, or healing music, associated with the Sixties human potential movement. Some identify the rock group Pink Floyd as the forefathers of the style. Today, heard in restaurants more than on radio, and attacked as "yuppie Muzak" by critics and detractors, it refers to almost any restful, instrumental work.

Chris Brody, program director for the WAVE 94.7 FM, Los Angeles' New Age station, feels the New Age proponents have varying ideas about which New Age musical styles are appropriate. "It basically makes people feel good, which is probably part of the overall philosophy of New Age people."

Anna Turner, author of *Music from the Hearts of Space*, writes, "The music that we play we call ancient and contemporary transcendent music, inner and outer space music. It's music that opens ... allows ... creates space." That's one source for the term "space music."

Given its association with space and its use in meditation, however, the music does not necessarily speak for the New Age movement or its ideology. The artists' intend to excite our spirituality, and build for us a bridge between the subconscious and the conscious. The composers use their work to express their own cosmology; one talks of music coming from other time-space dimensions, another relates "out of body experiences," while several claim healing properties for their music.

Peter Michael Hamel, composer and author of *Through Music to the Self,* says spiritual music should provide "links with the deepest in human experience—without ... falling into naive eclecticism." New Age musicians furnish this link.

Windham Hill's Anne Robinson says listeners respond to the "human touch" apparent in the label's music and absent from most other genres. "There's too much alienation, too many megacorporations" in the industry, states Robinson. The music may have an intangible quality, "but it translates into something very real."

Although Robinson thinks the spiritual overtones in the term "New Age" hurt business more than they help, her pet project is a live recording of chanting Buddhist monks. Fascinated by Tibet since childhood, Robinson traveled there last year to visit an ancient monastery near Lhasa. "It was amazing and transcendental," Robinson told *Savvy* magazine. The experience motivated her to collaborate with Mickey Hart, percussionist for the Grateful Dead, in producing the live recording. She doesn't believe the record will go platinum, but considers it a fine representation of a spiritual culture.

New Age can also be used as a background to guided dream imagery, to music therapy, and to prevent and relieve stress. Many book stores sell videos of Yoga and Tai Chi instruction, whose sustained popularity makes them the New Age movement's answer to Jane Fonda.

Originally, New Age appealed to the metaphysically minded supporters of the movement. As listeners discovered they could enjoy its meditative rhythms without embracing the ideology, the sound began to cross over to audiences disinterested in the philosophy. Listeners range from students to baby-boomers to senior citizens, but the core market remains the professional, college-educated 25 to 40-year-old—the market advertisers want. Robinson calls them DINKs—dual income couples, no kids.

"We're driving people, who found buying records a jarring experience, didn't know what to buy, and couldn't keep up as they got older, back to the record stores," says Robinson.

Last year, New Age music sales accounted for nearly three percent of the industry's $4 billion annual revenues. Windham Hill's sales skyrocket about 140 percent annually, and Robinson predicts their sales of LPs, CDs, and cassettes to hit $30 million this year.

The selling strategies in the business call for placing the merchandise in health food stores, book stores, specialty shops and mail-order catalogs with almost no advertising or promotion.

Today, New Age's popularity continues to grow. Pianist George Winston, perhaps the best known of its largely faceless roster, held a position on *Billboard* 's Top 40 jazz chart for over 180 weeks with his album *December*. Surgeons find the music helps prevent stress while they operate. Even a Hell's Angel wrote to Windham Hill, "I know I'm not supposed to like this stuff, but I do."

Robinson believes fans like the music because it's the kind they hear in their own heads, and would make themselves, if they played piano, guitar, flute or any other kind of instrument.

The WAVE's Chris Brody contends that New Age music expresses a very modern, less-harsh sound. "This type of music is in sync with the Eighties and Nineties," she says. "The world is smaller in terms of technology being able to link countries. The music doesn't have the pounding beat of the industrial revolution, and instrumental music doesn't have any words, so it's easy for everybody all over the world to enjoy it."

"New Age music is the soundtrack for the movie of the mind," rocker Eddie Jobson, formerly of Roxy Music and U.K., and now a leading New Age pianist and composer, told *Time*. Many former rock fans have turned to this new, soothing music, but do not feel they have mellowed out, just matured.

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The music fades as the cassette comes to an end. You're back in reality. Yet this time you're ready to face the world with a whole new outlook. Whether for metaphysical uses or just for pleasure, the optimism and relaxation of the New Age grows on.

Sonya Shelton, professional music critic of the Nineties, would rather hear notes than take them.

Mayans to the Rescue

A Calendar, A Convergence, A Cosmic Cure-all

By Chris Callard



Art by Kimberly Blair

Something was afoot. My fellow elevator passengers buzzed with the day's hot news.

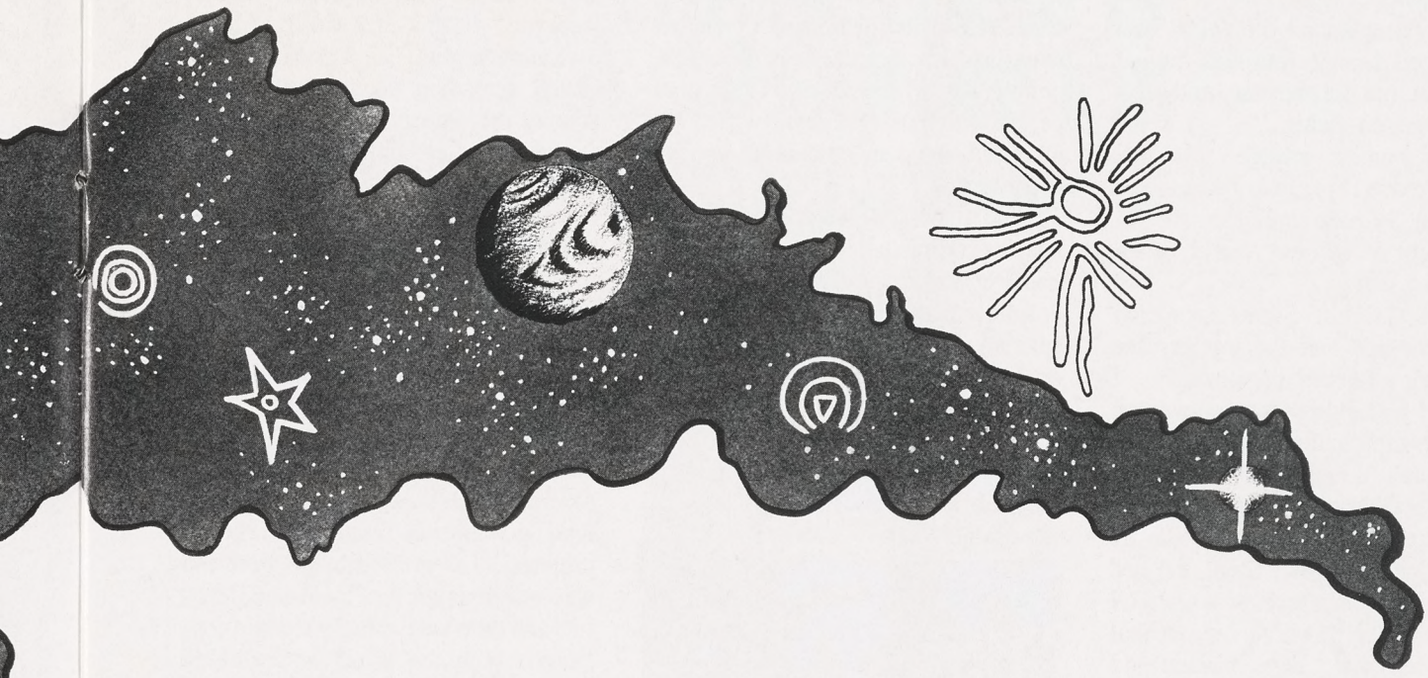
"Have you heard?" a middle-aged man with mutton chops asked. "There's a Neo-Platonic Resurgence. Descartes, all those guys, they're out."

"No, you heard it wrong," a matronly woman corrected. "Everyone's talking about the Colonic Occurrence. It's the President's colon again. The media loves disease."

A young clipboard carrying messenger shook his head. "Uh-uh. They're still on about the Contra Divergence. Who don't know that?"

"You all mean this Harmonica Convention," a thin guy wearing plaid stated. "All over the world, people blowing on mouth organs. What next?"

I disembarked, went to my dentist's office, and sat down to wait. The Muzak irritated me—all wind chimes and weird flutes, blase space-music in a hip-wimp-jazz mode. A breathy female voice—like Brenda Vaccaro on those tampon commercials—came over the speaker and said we were listening to the WAVE. It washed over me like a wave



of ennui. Probably saved the doctor from using gas.

To keep awake I picked up a magazine called *NEW FRONTIER*. A nostalgia thing on the Kennedy years, I figured. Undoubtedly chock-full of more crackpot conspiracy theories. But nope, it weren't that. It was a trumpet for the so-called "New Age" and contained crackpottery of a different sort. You know, Tantric massage, whirlpool sinosoidal current tapotament and psychic revitalization through ear-wax fermentation. It also featured an interview with Jose Arguelles, the fellow who came up with the Harmonic Convergence idea —obviously the event my elevator pals found so confusing. I'd heard of it. I'd found it confusing, too. What was the deal?

Well, it's apparently all tied into the Mayan calendar—which I don't think anyone uses anymore except as a wall decoration since the civilization that developed it disappeared about a thousand years ago. August 16th and 17th saw a lot of planets line up in a special order for the first time in 50 centuries—converged in harmony, don'tcha know. It also marked the entrance into the calendar's final 25 years, the last 25 years of "history as we know it," according to Arguelles. (Marking as well, the way I see it, an opportune time to get into the textbook racket.)

The Harmonic Convergence acted as a conduit connecting the old world of "acceleration" with the new of "synchronization." The difference between these two worlds "is the difference between the myth of endless material progress," Arguelles has written, "which has brought us nuclear war and environmental degradation, and a new myth ... the global village of planetary synchronization and cooperation ruled by the arts of peace." Thanks to the "advanced galactic science of the 'ancient' Maya," Arguelles pinpointed that August weekend as the precise time for the switcheroo.

The humans taking part in the H.C. serve, in their way, as conduits, too. Roy Hollister, of the Association of Body, Mind and Spirit in Laguna Beach, says that the current activity is designed to fix an electromagnetic imbalance we're suffering. "We believe that everyone has a matrix of energy points in their body that align with the matrix of energy points in the planet, and into the solar system and the universe." Problem is, these points aren't lined up. "Destructive forces have caused us to become out of tune with our higher selves," he said. "There is an energy discrepancy." We now are re-aligning with the planet's electromagnetic gridwork.

Sacred and historical spots around the world acted as strategic gathering places for channelling good energy into Mother Earth. A call went out to 144,000 devotees: purify yourselves for 12 days, then link up in the "Earth Surrender Rite" beginning at dawn, August 16. Why that many? "These 144,000 humans are a resonating core," Ar-

guelles writes, "whose number signifies the harmonic of light, 144 ... (they) represent the resonant biological battery plugged through common mutual attunement into the planetary and solar electromagnetic fields...." It's the minimum human voltage, you see, needed to reach 11 percent of the globe's population, in turn setting up the infrastructure of a new world order. Simply put, that is.

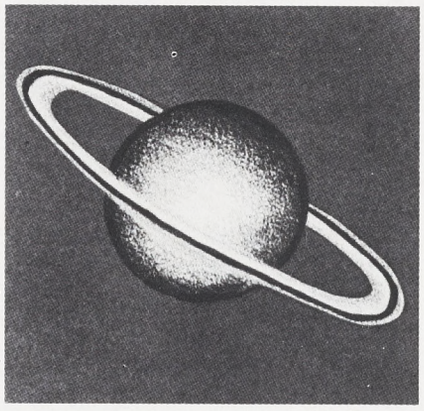
Machu Picchu, Stonehenge, the Great Pyramids—all the top psychic tourist stops figured prominently. I must say I was disappointed, however, that a one-time hallowed ground near CSULB didn't make the list. Puvungna, a Gabrielino Indian village, was located on the eventual site of Rancho Los Alamitos. There, the god Chinigchinich appeared at a council meeting, setting down all future tribal law and religion. Very spiritual and pretty damned sacred. Yes, a god in Long Beach. But no mention in relation to this big event —guess He followed a different calendar.

While the prophesies of other civilizations and seers play a part in the Harmonic Convergence timetable—you've got your Hopis, Aztecs, Tibetans, Nostradamus and, I think, Mrs. O'Leary's cow—it is the Mayans who garner top-billing. A very advanced race, according to CSULB Latin American History Professor Dr. Bill Svec, their heyday antedated the Christian era by several centuries. "Their knowledge of architecture, mathematics and calendar years was far superior to that of almost any other known people in their time," Dr. Svec explained. They've also become enshrouded in mystery, principally due to their sudden extinction.

Historical hypotheses on the disappearance abound, Dr. Svec said, and prompt extreme disagreement. Some feel an ecological disaster, affecting the climate, was to blame. Others speculate a massive disease epidemic wiped the society out. Or, another school suggests, they may have suffered domination at the hands of a fierce, less civilized people. Jose Arguelles believes the Mayans were "galactic navigators" called back home.

A further Mayan perplexity involves their ruins—they're built of stone in a region that doesn't yield the material. "It's unclear where they got it, or how," Dr. Svec related. "These were people who didn't know the wheel. It's all mind-boggling, and there are no definite answers."

The uncertainty surrounding this ancient civilization may explain its attractiveness to theorists touting new cosmic schemes. "In my lifetime I've seen an awful lot of nonsense coming out of the manipulation of information on the Mayans," the professor said. "One of the advantages of fooling around with the Mayans is people can make any conjecture they want because there is no contrary evidence."



Art by Kimberly Blair

It's really nothing unique, this talk of hope and renewal, this reliance on otherworldly saviours to set us straight. Back in the 1950s a bloke named George Adamski was conveying messages from aliens that we earthlings needed to clean up our act or else the Big Kabong'd hit. Gained quite a following, too. He probably saw *The Day The Earth Stood Still*, where friends to humanity Klaatu and Gort tried the same schtick. In fact, George's Venutians and Martians kind of looked like Micheal Rennie, the film's star. And his space women all embodied the Fifties' ideal of hourglass figures. More recently, an illiterate Swiss farm boy made contact with visitors from the Pleiades. They've offered the same "be good to yourselves and the planet" warning. And didn't the Age of Aquarius dawn less than two decades ago? (Or is it dawning now—revisionist utopianism?)

Interestingly enough, the Aztec calendar ended a cycle and entered a new, more bullish one that fated August weekend. In this scenario the god of love and learning, Quetzalcoatl, was to return, spreading goodness about. Of course, the date in 1519 when Montezuma expected Him, Cortez made his entrance, and you know what happened there. Anyway, I don't think He showed this time. (If He did, the media missed a great photo opportunity. Maybe I missed it too, and should keep an eye on the Donahue listings.)

The big planetary clock ticking toward 2000 might lend another clue to the popularity of New Ageism. In his book, *The Pursuit of The Millennium*, Norman Cohn charts the rise of apocalyptic movements. Originally, he notes, prophesies of great change were the way religious groups "consoled, fortified and asserted themselves when confronted with the threat or reality of oppression." Particularly at times of general uncertainty and excitement people flocked to the *Book of Revelations* and enthusiastically followed neo-messiahs.

Just as today's New Agers look to the ancient Mayans for inspiration, our cousins in Medieval Europe harkened to the Greek and Roman fantasy of the "State of Nature." This ideal setting found all men equal in status and wealth. Exploitation and persecution existed only in memory. It was " ... a state of affairs characterized by universal good faith and brotherly love and also, sometimes, by total community of property and even spouses," Cohn writes.

To save the world or not to save the world, that is the ... well, you catch on. Either we direct our communal energies at the magnetic core—grand-scale holistics or the planet gets "blowd up" real good. Some pin their hopes on the timely ending of a dead culture's "At-A-Glance" appointment book. As for me, I'm going to work toward getting a Democrat in the White House. ✎

Chris Callard, after a collegiate career spanning some 48 semesters, will graduate this December with a BA in Skepticism.

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A Glossary for the New Age

By Rachel L. Heller

Astral Plane — a frequency of time and space beyond the physical body containing mankind's emotions. This plane amplifies the higher self, imbuing the soul with pure spirituality.

Aura — a subtle emanation surrounding and permeating living beings; identified through Kirlian photography. A force field of energy generated by a body's various life energies, registering impressions, thoughts, feelings and actions of an individual. Auras change color and shape in response to an individual's emotional and physical condition.

Balance — occurs when one's physical body, emotionality, mentality and spirituality function harmoniously.

Chakra — a Sanskrit term meaning wheel; refers to the seven major and five minor psychic energy centers in the body, corresponding to particular glands. (1) Root chakra: located in the genital area, giving sexual energy. (2) Spleen chakra: located two inches below the navel, forming endurance and energy. (3) Solar plexis chakra: located slightly above the navel, harboring emotions. (4) Heart chakra: located in the heart, manifesting love. (5) Throat chakra: located in the throat, fostering communication. (6) Third eye chakra: located an inch above the eyes in the forehead's center, possessing intuition. (7) Crown chakra: located at the top of the head, receiving information and intelligence.

Channel — any function of creation from the higher-self to physical-self. Any creative endeavor such as music, art, or dance is considered a form of channelling. A channeller acts as a voice representation conveying information from teachers and guides. Channelling, if performed unconsciously, is called trance-channelling.

Consciousness — mental awareness; present knowing of one's psychological and spiritual self. A function of the mind illustrating the degree of one's awareness.

Crystal — commonly referred to as Quartz. Mineral oxide of silicon composed of one atom of silica and two atoms of oxygen. Crystals are formed by solidification of a variety of naturally occurring chemical compounds and elements. Quartz amplifies and transforms energy, thus generating electricity. Electronic oscillators, found in radios, television, and radar systems, depend on crystal's extreme precision. Quartz crystal chips found in microelectronic circuits are used in computers. Our bodies are controlled and regulated by energy flows and pulses; crystalogists claim crystals can influence these forms of energy.

Rachel Heller, a gun-toting New Yorker, has an unnatural interest in crime and punishment.

Energy Bodies — three different energy intensities, working together to power the human body. (1) The physical body. (2) The electrical and magnetic energy fields surrounding the physical body; called the etheric, electrical, or emotional bodies. (3) The realm of thought, the mental body; thoughts, acting on the conscious or subconscious mind levels, are created here.

Etheric Energy— energy fields more subtle than the physical atom groupings. Examples of these are chemical, electrical, magnetic and light energies.

Healing — unblocking energy flow to body cells, forming new cells, rebuilding organs, producing sound health.

Higher Self — the most spiritual and knowing part of oneself; responsible for wisdom and guidance.

Holistic Health — applying medical practices in order to achieve a balance among the physical, emotional, mental and spiritual aspects of a person.

Intuition — instantaneous knowing of something without the conscious use of reasoning; an instinct; an immediate recognition. Philosophical doctrine maintains reality is perceived by intuition.

Manifesting — a method of programming the subconscious mind, filling a void in one's life.

Meditation — a period of mental silence for obtaining a measure of mental clarity and opening oneself to inner harmony. A process of disconnecting the outer senses, enabling the perception of inner senses.

Metaphysics — a system of principles and theories which go beyond the physical plane and body. The study of abstract essential reality.

New Age — a time when humans will search for a higher consciousness rather than pursue materialistic gain.

Shaman — a sacred leader and teacher; commonly referred to as "witch" or "medicine woman or man."

Subtle Body — the auric body linking mankind with the celestial bodies and serving as a bridge between this life and the next. Esoteric teachings hold each individual has an auric and physical body. Also known as the Etheric body.

Teachers and Guides — spiritual entities who manifest themselves in order to assist in decision making; they relay information from the source of enlightenment.

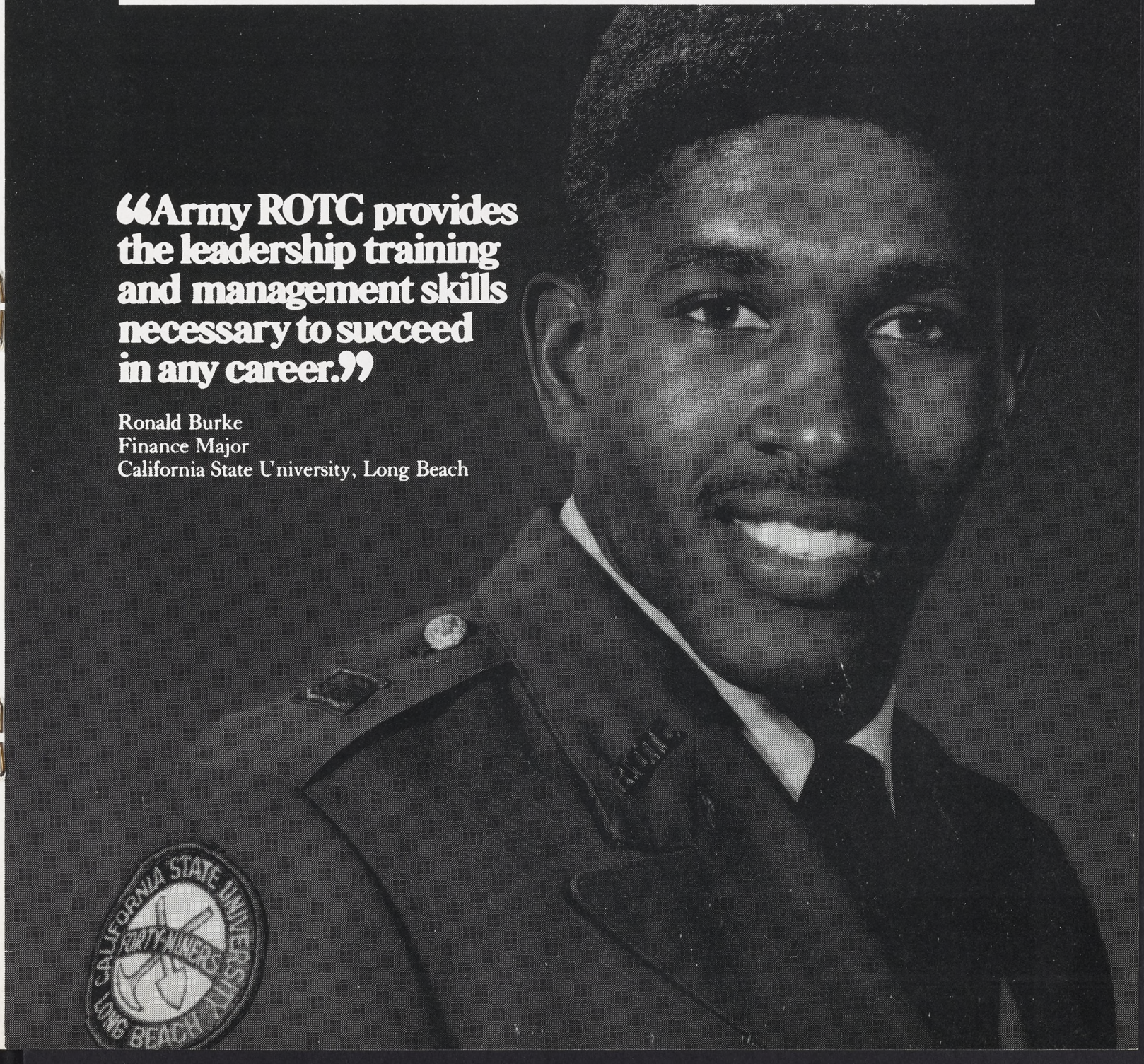
Yoga — physical practices integrating the physical, emotional, and mental bodies with the higher self.

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Ron Burke is a success oriented young man. So when he saw that ROTC provided him with the chance to have two careers when he graduated, he joined the program.

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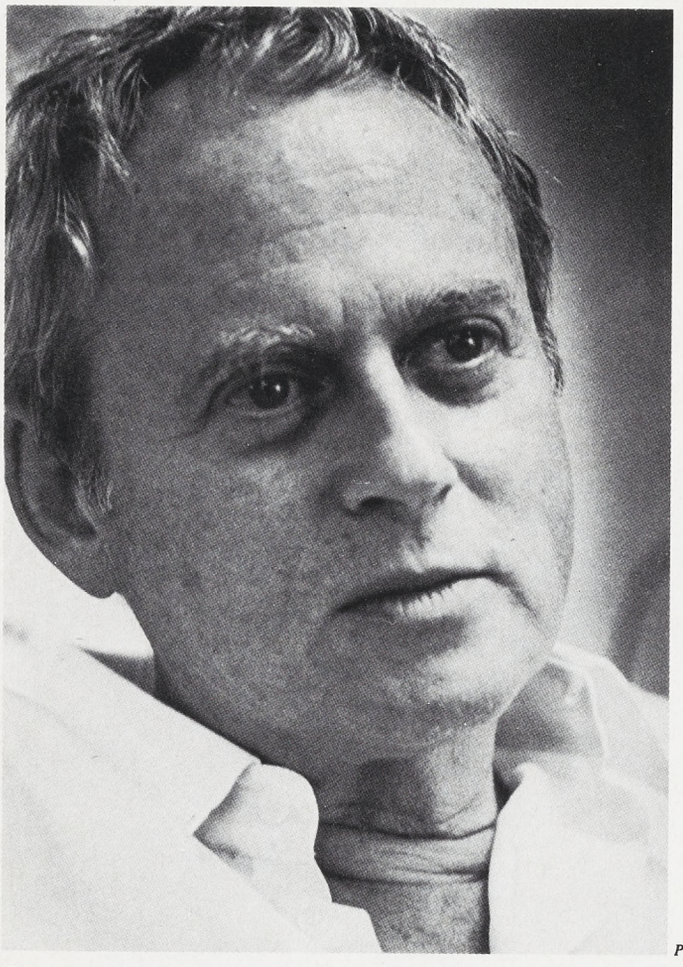


Photo by Sheri Steiner

Larger Hearts, Larger Minds

By Peggy Haynes

Lucid dreaming, channelling, understanding intuition, exploring transpersonal dimensions, liberating the unconscious and enhancing our creativity. The books of Jeremy P. Tarcher, the West Coast's leading New Age book publisher, address these mind/body/spirit issues under such diverse titles as *The Aquarian Conspiracy: Personal and Social Transformation in the 1980s, The Intuitive Edge: Understanding Intuition and Applying it in Everyday Life, Peak Performance: Mental Training Techniques of the World's Greatest Athletes,* and *Drawing on the Right Side of the Brain.*

Just mentioning Tarcher's name can set off a debate between New Age advocates and its skeptics. Tarcher believes humanity is evolving towards a larger destiny, but a traveler on the evolutionary path must look out for the many potholes and roadblocks created and maintained by humankind itself.

University Magazine's associate editor, Peggy Haynes, met with Tarcher in October this year at his Sunset Boulevard offices.

"Mr. Tarcher will be with you in a minute," says Steven, the office receptionist.

A few minutes later, Huxley, Tarcher's frisky, one-year-old Golden Retriever, charges out of Tarcher's private office and lunges at the interviewer with tail-wagging puppy zeal. Tarcher himself follows, smiling and saying, "It's good to see you." Following Tarcher into his inviting, private office is like walking into an anthropologist's study, where a profusion of photographs of gorillas and chimpanzees, dolphins and whales, hang as graphic reminders of humanity's slow and tedious awakening from its unconscious past.

UM: How do you define your books?
TARCHER: I publish books that are aimed at the transformation market, at people interested in learning about themselves and about society and growth on a serious basis.
UM: Who reads your books?
TARCHER: Spiritual yearners, seekers after a quiet heart and an informed mind.
UM: You publish books that address serious issues. How important are these issues to you? Would you publish a book that is the key to life if you knew you wouldn't profit by it?
TARCHER: I don't think there is one answer, one key. I wouldn't risk my business for any one title; if it demanded that of me, then it would not be the answer to *my* life. If somebody said, "Do this book but it will cost you $2 million," I'd say, "If it's the answer to life, let somebody else publish it and we'll all get the answer from him."
UM: You have recently published two books on global peace, *Citizen Summitry* and *Securing Our Planet.* Will global peace come about?
TARCHER: I published those books and they were commercial failures. Peace is just not a subject you can sell in bookstores. People don't want to read about peace in the way they want to read about violence and sex and making money. Peace is not entertaining.
UM: How do you feel world peace can be brought about?
TARCHER: That's a subject about which I know nothing. I am grateful for the efforts of those involved in it. I would like to think that the books I publish, although not directly related to world peace issues, do contribute to the peace of individuals and to their peacemaking abilities.

UM: Were you involved in the Vietnam War protests?
TARCHER: I was a "Hawk" for a long time during that period. For many, many years, and at the beginning of the Vietnam War, I felt that it was the thing we should be doing, and perhaps for awhile, it may have been. But there is a point where a parent can be appropriate in punishing a child and there is a point where he or she stops. I don't mean that we were the adult and the Vietnamese were the children. I mean that some actions can be right up to a point, and then all wrong, and become more and more wrong the further they are pursued. Clearly, we went crazy as a nation, just as we are capable of going crazy again under this current administration.
UM: You have published a book by George Leonard entitled *The Transformation: A Guide to the Inevitable Changes in Humankind.* Do you agree that these changes are inevitable?
TARCHER: I would not say that evolutionary changes are inevitable. I think what George meant, and what I would accept in terms of the "inevitable" is that there seems to be an impetus towards growth, towards change, towards an enlargement of perspective rather than a diminution of it, towards people understanding the need for a larger consciousness and a larger perspective on reality.

But there is also in the world a great deal of resistance to change. The fundamentalism in religion throughout the world is a reaction to the broadening of the base of people everywhere who believe they can have direct experience of realms of consciousness other than those we experience everyday. The only way for the orthodox religions to maintain control is to go back to more and more repressive techniques. I don't know that these repressive perspectives are not going to succeed. In some countries, they already have. In some parts of this country, they have. Were it not for the very vigorous political action of many who are not at all concerned with the New Age, but with constitutional rights, the inevitability of these changes in the United States would, by no means, be a certainty.
UM: Are you saying that those concerned with constitutional rights and individual freedoms will help indirectly?
TARCHER: That's right. I don't consider Norman Lear, for example, or *The People for the American Way*, to be New Age advocates. But they are terribly contributory to the keeping of fundamentalist perspectives under control.

Nothing seems to me to be inevitable. The universe, I believe, is composed of chance as well as law. There is cause and effect, and there is a certain amount of randomness which is unpredictable. We live both in a Newtonian and a quantum universe, and therefore we live both in circumstances that are clearly predictable and in those where the most important elements are unknown.

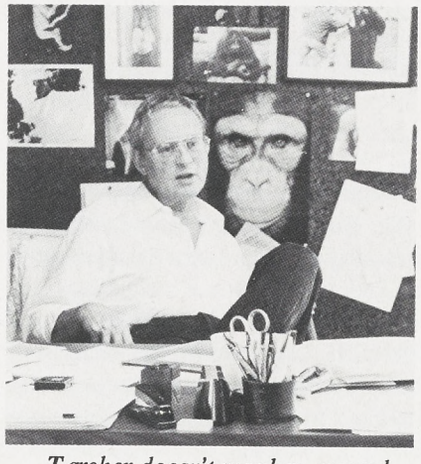


Photo by Sheri Steiner

Tarcher doesn't monkey around.

UM: How do you reconcile the contradictory viewpoints between the Newtonian and quantum theories? Are these not two entirely opposite ways of looking at the universe? How do you solve the dichotomy?
TARCHER: I don't have any need to solve any contradictions. I live with them as we all do. We act with a mixture of instinct and intuition, of conscious and unconscious desires, of forces we're aware of and those of which we are not. There are things I control and things that control me. There is no neat explanation for the way life is lived. I don't have it if there is one.
UM: Is there a larger destiny for humankind? Will we achieve our full human potential?
TARCHER: My heart subscribes totally to that perspective. In terms of when it will come about, we are speaking of time periods vastly beyond those which I can speak to. I do not believe that the year 2000 is the beginning of any great change. I would like to think that over extended periods of time, our intellectual capacities will improve to the point where what is now considered exceptional becomes the norm.

I don't know whether it was Aldous Huxley's deathbed statement or a perspective generated during a mescaline experience, but his view on how life could be generally improved was, "If we could only be a little bit kinder." There are times when I would settle for human evolution towards just being a little bit kinder. I think it's possible that there will be a change over time in our ability to live empathetically with one another; this change can be generated not only culturally, through normal education, but specifically through the intelligent application of various chemical substances. These drugs are sometimes called empathogens. One such drug, MDMA, called "ecstasy," opens up the heart, reduces defensiveness and allows its users to communicate in a loving, tender and understanding manner that they would otherwise be incapable of. It is possible for us to grow not only larger minds, but larger hearts.
UM: How great a role does environment play in humankind's struggle to reach its fullest potential?
TARCHER: Environment is clearly important. In the past, if you were on a path of the spirit, you went to a monastery, you hung out with monks, or nuns, with those who were involved in the same effort. It was only within a supportive environment that you could work against the pulls and currents of daily life. For example, in Buddhist life, community was one of the three essential elements: Dharma (the law), discipline and community. Without all three, you did not find your way toward the goal of satori. Community is a constant environment. It's *always* there, and if one's family or other community is not supportive, it is difficult to pursue a spiritual life.

If we were to live in an environment

that was genuinely supportive of the best in each of us, and if we were able from our earliest childhood through our latest years, to cultivate our capacities for generosity and understanding, goodness and wisdom, we might have a whole civilization of people similar to those we now consider to be the very best.

UM: What prevents us from being more "open?" George Leonard writes about the return to ecstasy as though it were a taboo. Why do we fear being more open with ourselves and with one another?

TARCHER: Look at the history of Western religion. Ecstatic states of consciousness were in fact taboo for long periods of time. Ecstatic states are revolutionary and individual; authority is disciplined and collective. The Church could not maintain its authority over a group of ecstatic individuals who claimed a direct participation with divine forces.

And what do we fear? We fear the "other," whatever the other happens to be, and we call the other the enemy. Men fear women, women fear men; in some way we fear anyone who isn't us. Our body fears any virus, any cellular material that isn't itself and tries to attack and kill it. On a larger level, we fear change of any kind, especially the great change, death.

UM: You have published several books on holistic healing, that is, using the powers of the mind to heal the body. Does it work?

TARCHER: I know that it works. There are some clearly articulated theories on the relationship between belief structures, the chemicals these beliefs produce, and the effect of these chemicals on various bodily systems. There are theories on how mood and attitude affect health. If I knew *how* it worked, then I could really make a contribution.

UM: What are your beliefs about God, or a higher power, or the "Energy Source?" Do you believe that one power controls the universe?

TARCHER: I don't know one main source. I can't even think in those terms.

UM: Do you have any intuitive feeling about God?

TARCHER: I can tell you that God, as you seem to be referring to Him, is not something that I believe in. That is, God, as an individual entity, connected by prayer, or by some form of divine consciousness to the fate of the individual man.

UM: Do you believe in the reincarnation of the human soul?

TARCHER: I don't think there is *a* human soul. That which is in us that is "soul" is not ours. I don't believe in a soul that is attached to an ego named Jeremy Tarcher. At best I may be, as we all may be, part of an incomprehensibly larger whole.

"As Freud is reputed to have said, 'Sometimes a cigar is a cigar.'"

UM: Do you believe there is a part of you that will endure after death, a part, if not individually yours, then a part that belongs to the "all that is?"

TARCHER: I suspect that there is. I certainly have had experiences which lead me to believe that there is some enduring thing that I am a part of, rather than "it" being a part of me.

UM: Do you consider yourself to be a religious person?

TARCHER: No. I was brought up as a Jew but I would like to think that I have gone beyond Judaism. To the degree that being a Jew means that you also cannot be something else, or that you are restricted to a certain set of beliefs, then I am no longer a Jew. When I meet other Jewish people, I feel comfortable and immediately accepted. But when I meet people in my family of choice, which is a family of spiritually-oriented people, I feel much closer.

UM: How do you, in a nutshell, define the New Age?

TARCHER: The New Age movement is in some way clearly the child of the whole Human Potential movement. It is about the transformation of the human heart, about extended consciousness and the ability to participate in larger realities. I think that most of what passes for New Age is a kind of psychic entertainment and is trivial, unless it produces a significant result in the way people are with one another.

UM: What are your views on this summer's Harmonic Convergence?

TARCHER: I think it brought shame upon the New Age and made it look foolish, but many individuals got a lot out of their Harmonic Convergence experience. My question is: was what they got out of their experience worth the damage that was done to the New Age world through the media's mocking of it?

I know people in the movement who disagree with me. Those of us who consider ourselves part of the New Age movement are aware that there are many people who for political and religious reasons, are against what we believe in. They are eager to see New Age leaders make fools of themselves. There is a high level of gullibility in many New Age advocates; they feel in order to be open-minded, they must be non-judgmental. Anything goes. For me, not anything goes. The Convergence was one of those items. It was a nice metaphor, but scientifically unproven.

UM: What are your personal beliefs about channeling?

TARCHER: I do not believe in 35,000-year-old personalities. I do believe that human capacities are vastly greater than we know and that channelling calls upon unacknowledged powers of the mind. There are aspects of the phenomenon for which I have no explanation whatsoever, but that does not mean I must accept the most fantastic explanations.

There is in science something known as the principle of least astonishment. It tells us to look for our explanations close to something we have already established as true, not far away from what we know and as improbable as it could possibly be. For example, in channelling, look for issues relating to subpersonalities, relating to memory and to things the person doing the channelling may have forgotten but which come out during the channelling process. You acknowledge that the mind is a

Continued on page 41

Lynn Allison

EPILOGUE

A Short, Short Story by Lynn Allison

I've never been to a funeral before. They offered to let me go when my great grandmother died, but I was only eight, so I said no. I'd been to visit her in the old folks' home, and then, even at eight, I sensed that death didn't necessarily mean dying. Still, I knew enough about death to realize I didn't want to look it in the eye. Funerals finally caught up with me today. My father is dead.

He was an alcoholic, my father, and I've spent years blaming him for things that have gone rancid in my life. I thought his drinking had everything to do with my miserable failures. So I crusaded against men; I crusaded against life. I thought one had poisoned the other, and I didn't know which to hold accountable. All the same, I believed my father had single-handedly ruined my life.

Today I mourn a man I swore I'd never mourn. And the tears I vowed would never come are spilling from my eyes, salty and scalding, sliding down my face. I regret so much: the ways I talked to him, about him, the awful things I wished, for so long, would happen to him. Now it's over. His life has escaped, irretrievable. I wished for this once. A lifetime of "I hate you"s and "I wish you were dead"s splash, smarting like alcohol on a newly-opened but long-festering wound, all over my heart. His death singes me.

We had a lousy relationship, my father and I. More than anything else, he embarassed me, so I never had friends over. I can still see him, sitting sideways in the big, beat-up chair, his legs swung up over the arm. There was something so tragic about finding him there—a grown man folded up like a yellowed, forgotten letter.

But he wasn't always that way. Early memories of my father yield a man I'm not even sure existed. I may have made him up. He was a jolly sort of man, who kissed my mother before he left for work and hooted "Howdy, bug!" when he came through the door at night. He smelled of after-shave and bought my sisters and me souvenirs when business took him away. He rode a bicycle and played golf. He whistled.

The first five years of my life I spent with this laughing man. I remember the July days I peeled my shirt off, mimicking him, and pretended to help him mow the lawn. At six, right before I started first grade, we moved. Everything changed. From then on, the father of my early childhood was replaced by an impostor, but not a very good one. The new father was a mumbling, incoherent slob whose temper flared more and more frequently as I grew up. What changed him? I still don't know what did it, and of course, now that he's gone and died, I'll never have a chance to find out.

Death. I've escaped having to deal with it until today. I was too young to feel death, in all its heart-rending splendor, when my great grandmother died. Death, funerals, black wreaths—they're on my doorstep—unexpected, uninvited, unwelcome.

Deciding what to wear to the funeral is hard. Those hot, scalding tears are welling up so that I can barely see, making their way to the tip of my chin. I choose a simple, black dress. What else does one wear to a funeral? As I walk out the door, I remember how my father used to say I looked "sharp" whenever I left for a party. I never took it as a compliment. I shrugged it off; he didn't mean it. He was just drunk. Now I think he must have been trying to tell me he was proud of me, and that he loved me. I race back to the bathroom mirror and tell myself how incredibly sharp I look, and for the first time, it has the sting of a true compliment, long-doubted. Then, funeral-bound, I collect myself and wade through the orange-goldness of the brittle autumn leaves.

The funeral itself is a blur. I'm conscious only of my sadness amplifying my mother's sadness. I keep telling her I'm sorry because I can't think of anything else. I love her. "I love you," I say. Oh God, my poor mother. She built her little life around his. Now what?

I feel, more than anything else, a tremendous sense of grief for my mother. She's got no one left to take care of. She'll go home tonight to a big, yellow house, the pungent stench of cheap wine oozing from every corner, from every couch, chair, lamp, rug. This smell, one I grew to hate, will remind her of my father, and she'll miss him terribly. I consider staying with her for a few days, but I realize it'd split me up the middle. I've wrenched myself from that house too many times. To go willingly back into it would defeat everything I've accomplished in life.

My father's alcoholism was hard on me, but I like to think I'm wiser for it. I thought one day I'd say to myself, "Everything I've done, I've done in spite of him." But, like it or not, today I'm thanking him in some perverse way. Maybe someday I'll trust men again. Maybe I'll even feel life the way others do.

I'm dazed, exhausted and wandering until hours later, when, sitting alone under a fiery October sky, I finally turn my eyes to my father's tombstone. I miss the early version of my father so very much. This knot of pain, an ice cube in my stomach, does me no good. I must put it away in order to go on.

For now, I earmark the grief and re-shelve it. My crusades are over; my father is boxed in the ground. Is this where life begins?

Lynn Allison, a literary gem, hopes to publish more of her lighthearted prose.

TUNE IN

Continued from page 13



water and Epsom salts, all located in a soundproof, light-free basement).

Sid explained that perception deprivation is designed to remove all extraneous sensory input, forcing the brain to create its own. The result, after several hours, is hallucinations and often startling revelations. It can often provide as much pure joy as watching newsclips of towelheads crashing their "Martyrdom" rafts into the shore.

"That sounds groovy, man," I said, "and...?"

"After we each take our turn in the tank, we all get together and have a heavy-duty, group rap session about our cosmic experiences."

A rap session! Now I've read my share of Kerouac novels, but this was a tough pill to swallow; spending a Friday night discussing cosmic theory? Whatever happened to overindulging in controlled substances while driving a carload of raving maniacs at unsafe speeds through residential neighborhoods? Or throwing watermelons from freeway overpasses? Or driving 20 miles out of the way just to moon a nun? Had my old punk-generation pals lost their self-indulgent edge?

Sid and I arrived at the party carrying 15 pounds of bananas. Several of the old gang were there: Safety Pin Sally, who used to vacuum the carpet in my VW bus with her nostrils, hoping to score spilt crank granules; Crystal Meth, who was the only person I ever knew to fix smack between her toes; and



Art by Mary Pagone

of course Diana Boredom, the nasal ski queen who used to sell off her mother's kitchen appliances to score soda.

That was in 1982; in 1987 these old friends, in all their long-haired, bead-wearing glory, looked more like a post-MTV version of the *Summer of Love*.

Yuck!

Now I have nothing against the Sixties, but what made that decade great were three things: drugs, free love and Jimi Hendrix. The Eighties' drugs have reached the point where you need a Ph.D. in molecular physics just to figure out whether you're going to have fun or end up in Bellevue; free love has consequences penicillin can't handle anymore; and Jimi Hendrix is dead.

As I watched Crystal smoke the banana peel dust, Bananadine, and get into the tank, I figured that this perception deprivation stuff was nothing more than a meaningless synthesis of organic Timothy Learyism and Zen let's-get-fucked-up-ism. But after just one session in the tank, and the discussions with these people, my normally empirical mind began to believe there was something going on here. We all sat around scraping banana peel insides and smoking bong loads of this banana crack, while each person took a turn in the tank.

Discussions of everyone's vivid hallucinating tank trips pervaded the room. Sidney's wallowing through misty chocolate tree rainforests, knee deep in boiling pools of raspberry marshmallow goop while being pursued by a sadistic, six-foot rectal thermometer bent on serious orifice expansion was totally different from Crystal's maddening, yet exhilarating race across an endless mirror-floor desert with Ali Baba and a toothless, four-headed chihuahua. Sally, on the other hand, felt a warm pulse and was sucked out through the pores in her scalp by a smiling rainbow and placed in a meadow where nature's unescapable logic rained down upon her.

While these inner-mind voyages differed from each other, there was a common belief experienced by many who went into the tank under the Bananadine influence. Three dimensional confines no longer existed. Their bodies no longer were individualized, but rather were all part of the whole and juxtaposed with time and space. Everything in the universe is dynamic, everything fields of energy. Nothing ceases to exist, it merely changes form. Therefore, there's no longer any reason to fear one's end. Death translates into nothing more than a concept devised by life insurance salesmen.

The next weekend at Crystal's astral projection party, my senses were horrified by the nightmarish sight of my old never-trust-anybody-over-35 friends mingling with a collection of *Big-Chill*, New-Age lounge lizards in flared jeans and surgically implanted chest hair. I grabbed Sally and begged for an explanation.

"So, Sally," I asked, "what's the deal with having all these ex-polyester warriors around?"

"Like, oh my God," she exclaimed, "like don't be so prejudice. These guys are harmonically aligned. Ringo here has shown me how to open my third eye, become in tune with the universe, and has helped me to discover that, like deep down inside, I'm really me. . . . I've discovered myself!"

"Big deal," I said, "I discovered myself back in the Seventh

grade."

"Oh, like bail the Mr. Eighties thing," she said. "I'm not talkin' narso (narcissism). Me and Bob have cruised the Ozone together, channeled the groove, and have rolfed all night."

"Right, rolfing!" I exclaimed. "Doesn't that involve sour cream, foreskin and fresh 9-volt batteries?"

"Gross!" she whined. "No, man, it's a way to prepare your clouded mind for real enlightenment by bailing out all negative vibes."

Rolfing is like the Budweiser-drinker's equivalent to sticking your finger down your throat.

Later at the same party, I ran into an old acquaintance named Dave. Dave was a self-proclaimed Hitler neophyte from way back, a platinum-card member of the Ollie North school of cool, you know ... a pinhead; and despite the numerous mini-series painting fascists differently, he still subscribed to that superior Arian race nonsense. That was, of course, until he got "New Aged." Cosmically motivated one night while watching *Altered States* on a mind pickled in tequila, he set out for Mexico with some Gestapo-youth yahoos in tow aiming to "dig up ol' Castenada" or any other celestial-like dude they could find. Amazingly enough, they did locate a medicine man who gave them some ayuahaska (yage). Just this was amazing enough. Every time I went down to Mexico the most astonishing thing findable was the donkey bar, which itself is pretty amazing, but in a totally different context.

Now yage isn't your everyday recreational drug. This shit does make your brown eyes blue, along with a number of other things. There is a profound derangement of the senses and an altering of conscious viewpoint. The Jivaro Indians use it to contact their beginnings. Dave ate the stuff and came back with a completely changed outlook. While hundreds of miles away, he came up with the same conclusions as the others.

"We are all of the one, man," he said. "Earthly life is just like a parade through town, and at the end we all go back to our normal state of being."

"Which is?" I asked.

Dave explained that in the depths of his "enlightenment" he verbally got down with a dynamic, ethereal, cosmic entity which he believes was a fellow spirit in its natural form. This entity explained to him many secrets of life, and endowed him with the ability to understand them. But as the yage's effects slipped away, so did his newfound knowledge until only a few "truths" remained. Did he really know, if only for a few hours, the secrets of the universe? Or was it all just some drug-induced delusion? We'll probably never know, but any experience that could turn a prejudice junkie like ol' Dave into a open-minded human being is damned well a profound one.

After leaving Dave to search for some Advil, I ran into the group's resident hippy guru, "Uncle Bob." Bob was a balding mid-lifer with a serious spare-tire mid-section; he wore a tie-dyed gutra, prehistoric thongs and the most pathetic array of passé icons imaginable. Bob is what hip literary scholar types like myself refer to as a goob, a doink or a Barney. He sensed my cranial distress and offered some help.

"See this," asked balding Bob, as he held up a fist-sized chunk of quartz. "Guess what it contains."

"Silica," I declared.

"No," he said. "It contains the earth's natural healing power. It will relieve you from your pain."

"Bitchen!" I said, "Does it come in caplets?"

"It doesn't work that way," he announced. "You must hold it against your head and it will suck out the pain."

"Don't be absurd, Bob," I said. "It's a fuckin' rock."

Now I know my geology, but Geraldo wouldn't pass up this opportunity, so I laid on the couch and began placing these stones upon my head. After several hours of trying, I finally found one that worked—Ice.

At yet another of Crystal's A.P. parties, I struck up a heavy rap session with Diana, excuse me, Moon Child.

"Ya know," I said, "this astral partying lacks a bit. I mean, sitting around together trying to leave our bodies? Whatever happened to trying to get inside each other's bodies?"

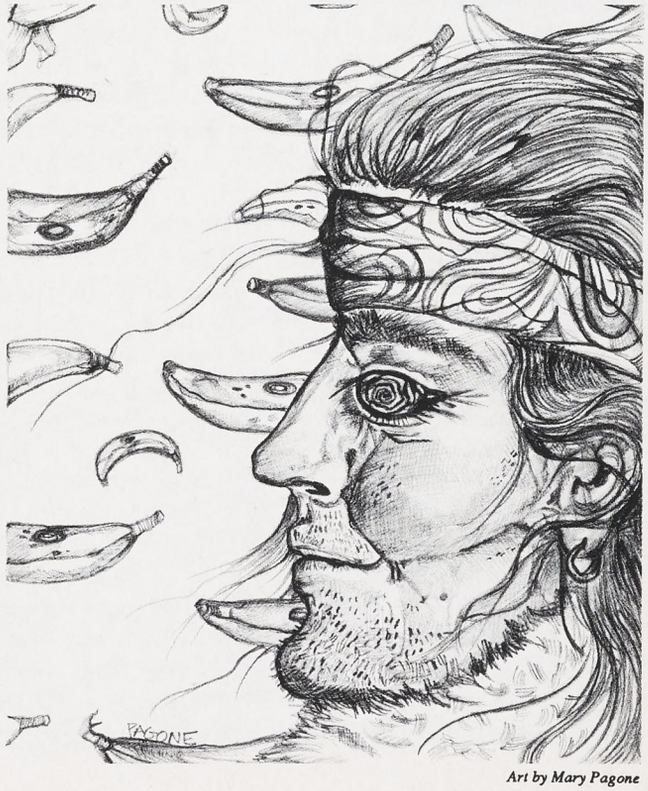
"No," said Moon, "that narcissistic crap is really out, man. What we're trying to do is project our souls out into the cosmos and maybe even meet each other there so we can walk hand in hand among the fluffy, pure beautiful clouds."

"Where's the bar?" I asked.

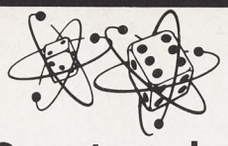
Astral projection was another one of those cosmic exercises which I was quite unprepared for. While unable to project at the party, I managed to several weeks later. And the differences between doing it and seeing it on ABC resembles the difference between a Lamborghini and a Yugo.

Those unplanned, mind-bending LSD trips in junior high school were alarming, but nothing compared to this astral projection stuff. For one thing, when you see Socrates barfing up hemlock-coated logic theorems on your box-lunch kraut

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Art by Mary Pagone



Quantum Jump

Continued from page 15

menters' efforts to humanize the quark.

Science had its hand on a slippery, semi-liquid reality—controllable to a certain extent—but threatening to seep between the fingers like quicksilver in alchemy. John Calvin's philosophy of determinism and predestination, slating everything for preplanned truth, was frustrated by the new physics. For one thing man gained too much power—creating atoms, destroying cities in an instant. And atoms, the pesky things, materialized and vaporized virtually at will, disregarding preestablished rules and procedures.

Below the molecular level, Newton's laws simply don't apply. "I can't tell you what an electron will do in the next micro-second," said CSULB physics professor Larry Lerner. "But I can give you the moon's position for the next ten thousand years." Again, for objects of higher mass than the sun or traveling at speeds exceeding one-tenth the speed of light, Newton's laws fall short.

The whole Calvinistic, Protestant work ethic was on the line if protons and electrons could work when they wanted, and then take a quantum leap away from the center when the heat and pace became too great. Physicists could initiate electron jumps which, chained together, formed a laser beam.

When left to their own devices, the behavior of particles reduces to statistical trends. Physicist and Einstein biographer Jeremy Bernstein writes in the *American Scholar* that Einstein was distressed over the fact individual atoms can't be tracked statistically except in clusters. Dismayed, Einstein threw up his hands. "All my attempts to adapt theoretical foundations of physics to this new type of knowledge failed completely. It was as if the ground had been pulled out from under one with no firm foundation to be seen anywhere."

But Einstein's own theories lent credence and distinction to the new world view perhaps more than any other scientific discovery. Seeing the interreliance of mass, speed, matter, and electromagnetic force fields led him in 1905 to a theory of haiku simplicity: $E = MC^2$. A decade later Einstein propounded his General Theory of Relativity, which stated that an object's position and rate of travel determined its mass. When he added gravity to his Special Theory of Relativity, space suddenly bent. The amount of curvature hinged on the gravitational tug of stars and planets and other objects in it. And the gravitational strength, in turn, depended on the mass of the astronomical body. Time became interwoven with space.

Western physics in the 1920s and 1930s opened its throttle wide, fueled by philosophy imported from Japan, India, and China. The temporal moved in as the fourth integral ingredient to the cosmic equation. The Cartesian, Newtonian, and Euclidian fence of three dimensions could no longer contain the discipline. Some, including Einstein, saw it as a forest fire out of control.

Several of Einstein's disciples hypothesized a fountain of youth, such as the one Ponce De Leon sought. If man could only reach the speed of light, they promised, aging would stop.

But the master physicist resisted the implications his younger colleagues found in his theories. According to his equations, man played too conspicuous a role in his own destiny and in the private churnings of the universe. No more were humans passive subordinates to a monarchical god, or the victim of indifferent mechanical laws, for each influenced his environment as much as it influenced him.



Art by Anthony Paular

Lerner contends that at the subatomic level determinism is dead. "Variables have become too complex. Nobody believes anymore in the strict cause-and-effect relationship. A doesn't always cause B."

Renowned film director John Carpenter, maker of The Thing, Halloween, and numerous other sci-fi, box-office blitzes, describes the S-matrix , bootstrap theory of quantum physics as "the collapse of logic at the subatomic level," a concept which inspired his latest fantasy, The Prince *of Darkness*.

But according to John Buchanan, a CSULB history professor, more than movies have rippled out from the ideas of quantum physics and relativity. Developments in genetics backed up the modern perspective. When physiologists studying genes found that evolutionary mutations appear to take place in quantum leaps, Darwin, with his theory of gradual change over millenia, fell out of fashion.

This new unpredictability of atoms and DNA, Buchanan feels, turned Americans in particular away from absolutist, Calvinistic values and towards situationally-based ethics.

Biologist and anthropologist Rupert Sheldrake and his associates observed the Hundreth Monkey phenomena. A monkey on a South Pacific island one day washed his yam, the staple food of the local primate population. Interestingly enough, all the other monkeys on the island mimmicked him and took their yams down to the ocean for cleaning.

Amazingly, anthropologists watching monkeys with the same diet on different islands, discovered that all were suddenly following the first monkey's behavior. Once the information had spread to sufficiently high numbers, it spread telepathically.

With unexplainables like these, what now could be counted on? What was right or wrong, true or false for any period of time? Einstein anticipated this. He knew the power science held in molding philosophy. As a Jew who

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Another Pretty Facet

By Mary Ann De Gree

Photo by Sheri Steiner



Crystal healing—fad or fact?

Crystals represent different things to different people. To some, they are a New Age fad which will soon wear off. To others, they are powerful tools for practical and metaphysical purposes. Either way, they have innumerable, though arguable, properties.

Enthusiasts say a crystal's tip is positively charged, and receives energy. When a crystal is held, its charge becomes negative and energy is given off. A heated crystal possesses piezoelectric properties when heated. Merely the warmth of a hand will change its polarity.

A crystal's appearance, as well as its environment determines its specific powers. Even fingerprints leave energy imprints affecting the crystal's potency and its ability to receive, amplify and store vibrations. Uneasy feelings can also be projected onto a crystal.

Belief in these properties is not new. Despite the recent crystal craze, these stones were used in similar ways by advanced ancient civilizations. In India, astrologers recommended wearing gems for protection from injury and from harmful planetary effects. Legends say crystals were used for telepathic communication in Atlantis, the legendary city in the west Atlantic. Leaders programmed these stones with information and rematerialized them into the earth to benefit future generations. Today's believers contend that they can tap into these crystals' ancient information.

Modern science has many uses for the quartz crystal, too, as it can amplify, focus, transfer, and transform energy. It is used in microphones, audio-video equipment and most wrist watches. Solar energy can be changed by quartz into electricity. When used in the microcircuitry of computers, quartz can also store large amounts of information.

New Age crystal enthusiasts attribute even more powers to these special stones. The familiar diamond is said to bring mental clarity and amplify the wearer's thoughts. Emeralds provide balance, harmony, growth and stability. Jade gives the wearer inner peace and healing, especially in the heart. Opal intensifies emotions, intuition and personal qualities. The pearl balances moods and can intensify angry or loving thoughts. The ruby strengthens the heart's arc while sapphire strengthens meditation. Gold, silver and copper, the three most common gems, are also the strongest energy conductors.

Lisa, a USC student, wears a topaz around her neck. "I am an emotional person and have problems keeping my mind on classes. When I heard about topazes managing moods and strong emotions, I decided to give it a try. My grades have improved and I know it is all because of this. I love it!" she exclaims, giving her crystal a thank you kiss.

Professional healers say crystals have even greater capabilities. Jane Dow, Ph.D., heals at the Edenic Light Center by laying stones on different parts of the body. "The crystal's properties begin to work with mental, physical, and spiritual energy systems," she says.

Dow, along with other healers, believes that when the body shows disease it is often the result of mental conflict. Each part of the body retains a specific emotion. For example, the heart and lungs hold sorrow and grief, the liver stores anger and the stomach attracts anxiety and fear.

When a crystal is placed on the body, it becomes a crystallized light form clearing the person's aura by uncovering painful memories. The patient must comprehend these events before healing can take place.

Another believer, Rhona Jordan, uses her crystals in similarly innovative ways. A year ago, she bought one for its beauty, then later heard about energy channelling seminars on meditation. After months of serious meditation, Rhona's hands began to burn constantly. "My hands were so hot I walked with ice cubes in them," she said. She later discovered she possessed a special healing power.

Her daughter Heather was skeptical until Jordan eased a four

CRYSTALS CRYSTALS CRYSTALS

day headache aspirin could not cure. She placed her hands on Heather's temples while concentrating through her crystals. "I could feel a warmth going through my temples," says Heather. "When Mom pulled her hands away, I felt the tension leave and a suction of energy with it."

The Jordan household now contains many crystals for specific purposes. Purple amethyst crystals are posted in the master bedroom to protect against burglary and to ease stress, while pink rhodocrosites calm and heal in the jacuzzi.

"I can't step into a room without seeing a crystal that will calm me, protect me, or make me feel well balanced," laughs Rhona's husband, John. "I may not believe in it, but my wife is happy."

Jordan is involved with every aspect of these stones, including restoration when something goes awry. "Cleansing a crystal," she says, "is like cleaning your mind. Everything is erased so thoughts become clear and productive." There are several methods of crystal cleaning,according to Jordan. The most common is burial in salt for one to seven days. The mineral can also be placed where fresh sea water will flow over it.

Other enthusiasts also claim phenomenal results from crystals. Pattie Gerrie, owner of the New Age Facial Shop, decided to incorporate crystals into her business after she experienced a tingling, revitalizing sensation while experimenting with her crystals.She now uses them in her facials.

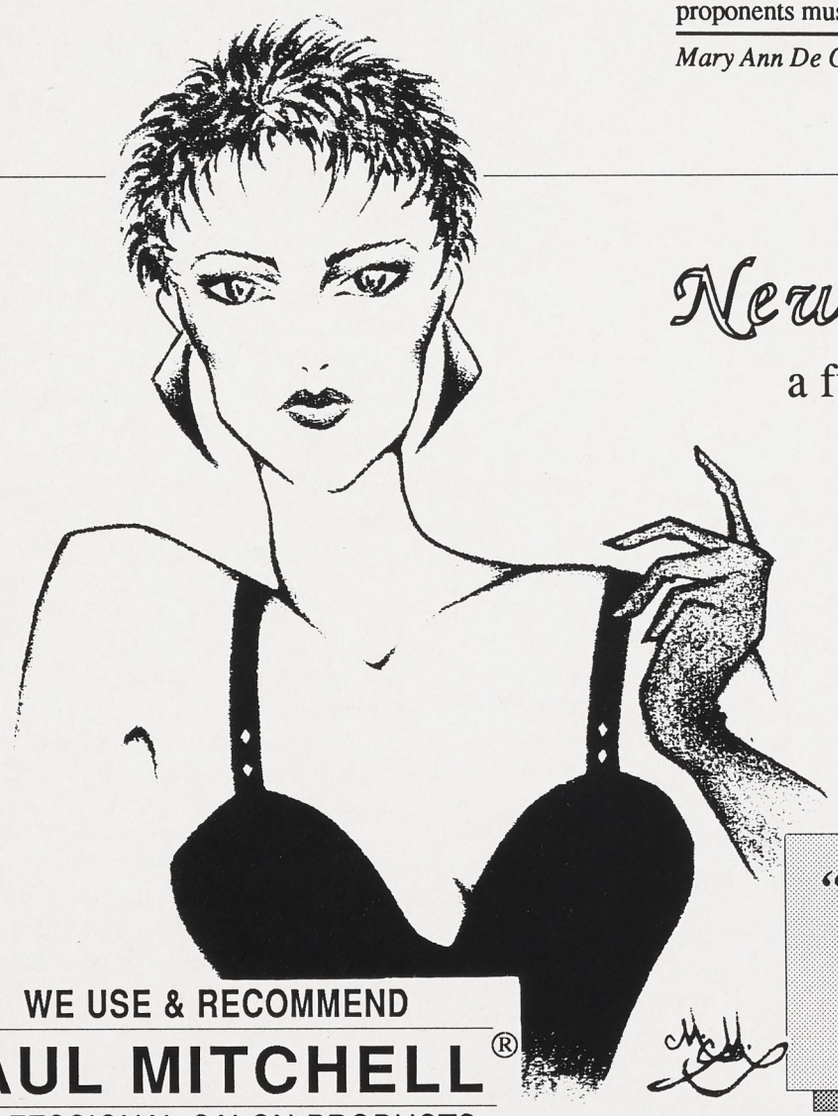
Besides using crystals for facials, Gerrie tackles larger tasks with her minerals. She owns the largest crystal and has programmed it to increase San Francisco's immunity. "It's the only crystal I allow visitors to touch because it's for everyone," she says.

Gerrie also heals with gem elixirs. Each crystal has a different vibration and feeling that, when placed together in water, cause those in physical or mental distress to experience relief after drinking the mixture.

She relies on intuition to mix her elixirs. "If someone has a specific problem, certain stones mixed together will help solve it," she said. "Of course, not every elixir comes out perfectly."

Whatever the true properties of crystals, both detractors and proponents must agree they transcend even the New Age. ✎

Mary Ann De Gree likes crystals but prefers diamonds.



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Scared Silly

Continued from page 11



"Grab your shoes and socks! Move to the next room!"

Surveying the pea-green room, with Don at my side, I located a drinking fountain, rows of benches and the guys with the reservation. One wall had a window and through it I saw a modern-day Auschwitz—thirty sullen, naked men standing at attention getting yelled at. Bagged clothing at their feet, crotches in their hands and deputies on their backs. This can't be real. I'm supposed to be in Paris sipping café au lait, watching women whoosh by, acting like an Ugly American. Instead, I'm sucking water, saluted by sixty male cheeks and feeling like a condemned Californian.

"Next group!"

Trudge, shuffle, mumble. Trudge, shuffle, mumble.

"Line up, let's go assholes!"

Shuffle, mumble. Shuffle, mumble.

"Backs against the wall!"

Mumble, mumble.

"No talking!"

So there we stood. Depu-tease walked around writing descriptions of what we wore, what we were.

"Strip to your socks and shorts. Clothing in the bags at your feet."

Mumble, stuff, mumble.

"Hey, didn't you hear me, assholes! I said, no talking!"

Stuff, stuff, stuff.

"Open your mouths and wiggle your tongues!"

Now I really felt stupid. Some of the guys had Cuisinart tongues while others didn't understand the question. I was somewhere in between.

"Okay, strip down!"

Total Humiliation, my arch nemesis, hung just around the corner, waiting to degrade me even further; all four cheeks burned red.

"Face the wall and crack a smile!"

To an outside observer, we "bared" resemblance to a proctologist's worst nightmare. To an insider, a grim reality. With our ends up and spirits down, the deputies made their silent rounds.

"Okay, grab your shoes, socks and shorts. Hit the showers!"

Close to three dozen men bathed and upon leaving, a cold cologne was hosed on heavily. Doused, deloused and dripping with toxic waste, we dried off. Dressed and depressed in new blues, we waited to be fed for the first time in over nine hours.

"Alright assholes, picture taking next. Move!"

After class pictures were shot we targeted in for dinner. Ravenous thoughts of a warm meal plus a few minutes of peace consumed our stomachs and psyches.

"Grab a sandwich and a cup of punch. One each!"

"This?" I said, looking at my baloney'd bread and pulp-red liquid. "This is nourishment? This is dinner? This is fucked."

The bug spray aftershave enveloped my nose, as I looked up at all the pajama blues. The smell only increased when I stared down at the stale sandwich. All this and captivity, too. All this for one low price, degradation.

Don, sensing my despair, handed me another half of bread. Thirty blue buds, backs bent and beat, slouched for 60 minutes after the sumptuous supper.

"Alright guys, line up. X-ray time. Move to the benches and take off your shirts."

Shuffle, strip, sit. Shuffle, strip, sit.

We straddled the benches and scrunched up to the guys in front of us, much like an amusement park ride. We waited, unamused.

After the "enlightening" experience, I didn't see God, Buddha or Shirley MacLaine, but I did see "Doc Richard," an MD inspecting for VD.

"Alright, drop your trousers so I can see your best friend."

Dropping our pants in unison, he sized up our work. A few guys were yanked out of line, but most of us passed, shorts flying at half-mast.

"Okay, shut up! Now you get to use the phones. When your number's called, go through to the next room."

Don was one of the first called. I was one of the last. Five phones and forty felons filled the cold, gray-green concrete room. There were only four phones. The guts of one littered the floor in the far corner, its cord lifeless and twisted.

Needing salvation from this hellhole, I ushered up behind a congregation of Mexicans. Since they were from the "reserved" group, I figured they'd be seated before my party. The other three phones were taken over by council, not individual. They reminded me of a bunch of eighth graders huddled by a receiver after dialing sex talk. In fact, I wouldn't put it past them, or me, for that matter.

"Alright assholes, put the phones down and sit."

Click, shuffle, squat. Click, shuffle, squat.

A trigonometry of numbers were called, men lined out, added up and angled out the rectangular room. I calculated the close of the door to parallel the close of my digits around the solution to my problem. Cubed Cubans crowded behind as I placed a call.

"Hello, Tammy? This is Mark."

"Mark! Where are you? Mike has been trying to get you out all day! Mike doesn't know where you are, nobody knows, cops included."

"I'm in County Jail, being processed like a piece of American chee... ."

"Mark, this is no time for Velveeta analogies."

"Thanks Tam, just trying to... ."

"Are you okay? They haven't raped you or anything, have they?"

"Don't worry about me, I'm fine."

"We love you."

"Yeah, thanks, me too. See you soon."

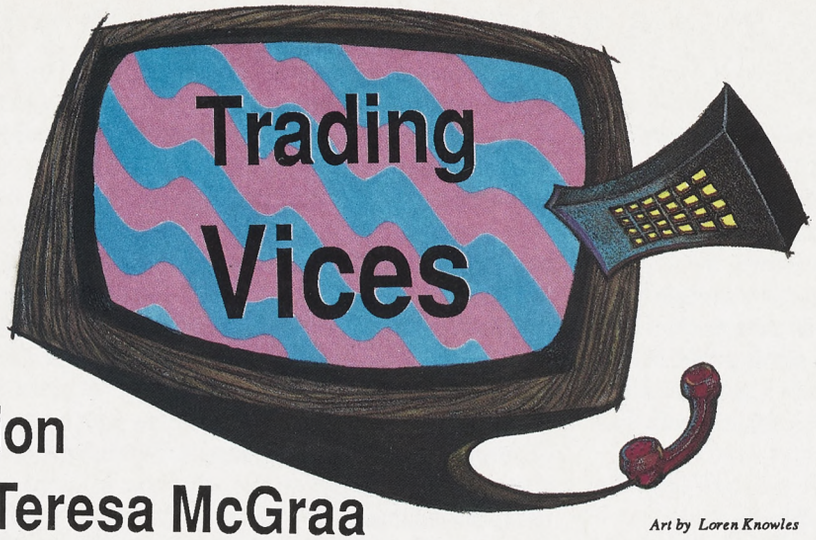
With all the pro-wrestling weenies eavesdropping with the agility of scab football players, I made my way through the mountains of muscle to a seat next to a dozing Coach Don.

I leaned against the wall and stared into a grinning toilet. This can't be happening. Where's Alan Funt? Where's the candid camera? Where's the commercial?

"Okay assholes, listen up. When I call your number get in line and move out the door."

My number signaled in and I rushed through the gap and

Continued on page 40



Fiction
by Teresa McGraa

Art by Loren Knowles

I unlatched the door and let myself in. I stood there for a moment, watching the dying rays of the golden Friday afternoon sunlight filter through the filthy smog and cast almost obscene shadows on my living room walls. Disgusted, I slammed the door and stalked to the living room. "What's wrong, Terri?" the ancient floorboards asked, creaking noisily beneath my hostile tread.

I flung myself into my green vinyl bean bag chair. Little plastic beans poured from a gash in the seam. I collected my thoughts. "What a shitty day," I proclaimed to the beans. I made little designs with them. I liked arranging their little bean lives. Sometimes I felt just like them. Someone or something much, much bigger than myself made little designs with my life—now a sad face, then a happy face and sometimes just a faceless blob. This was one of those times. I snatched up all the beans and hurled them across the room. I wanted nothing more to do with them. They fell to the hard wood floor with a clatter. And there they would stay until I moved them. Ha!

I cursed fate for dealing me such a rotten hand. I'll just bet she plays with a marked deck, too.

"I can't possibly exist without knowing the Truth," I sullenly confided to a cluster of little bean inmates recently escaped from the oppressive green prison.

"This makes the third day in a row I've missed it. I can't wait until Monday. I must know now." A bean went sailing across the room and landed clink in the radiator. I flicked another and another until all the bean inmates lay scattered and alone, littering the otherwise barren wasteland (my living room floor).

"Did Erica and Jeremy marry?" I interrogated a lone bean, "or did the pregnant blind girl Jeremy knew when he was a Tibetan monk stop the ceremony? And just whose baby is she carrying, anyway?"

Why, oh why, did the lunch room's TV have to die? How grossly unfair. Lunch hour, once an enriching and fulfilling experience, now plodded by oh so slowly, oh so emptily. I raised my questioning eyes to the skies. "It's not like I'm asking for world peace or anything. I just want to see *All My Children* without any rude disruptions."

A shimmering gleam distracted my eye. I turned my head and saw the day's last sunbeam, like a rainbow of hope, pour vividly through the window and splash an eerie, almost holy glow on my TV set, the proverbial pot of gold. I gasped. Someone up there heard me. Everything would work out. I knew it.

"Where did I put the remote control?" I saw it peeking out from under a heap of unread newspapers. I kept those next to the fireplace for chilly evenings (cheaper than kindling). "How did you get over there?" I mused, crossing the room. Just as I stooped to retrieve the device, the bringer of pleasure and eternal happiness, I stumbled on a bean and careened into the blasted newspapers. Damn!

I brushed myself off, grabbed the remote control and picked my way carefully back to the green prison. I sat down, feeling rather like a mother hen might feel perched on her nest, incubating her little eggs except I incubated little beans. I figured *Oprah Winfrey* would be on soon.

Transvestite grave diggers from Hang'em High County, Alabama were Oprah's scheduled guests. I could learn so much from them. I knew it. Maybe they could even help keep my mind off Erica and Jeremy, if only for awhile.

My sweaty palms, streaked with newsprint, grasped the remote control firmly but gently. I pressed the "ON" button. The grey-green screen sprang alive and filled the darkened room with lively shades and shadows. I settled into the "nest" the way a Hollywood starlet might slip into a luxurious bubble bath. At last I knew true bliss.

Oprah had started without me. A middle-aged lady with horn-rimmed glasses and a beauty school hair-do was asking "Melody" (not his real name) how he could possibly live with himself.

"Well, ma'am," he began, carefully weighing each word, "It's jes' sumthin' Ah gotta accept. Buhlieve you me, t'ain't easy, no-sir-e-bob. You trah diggin' graves wid fouah inch heels!"

My heart went out to the man. Why should he have to defend himself to a woman who trusts her hair-do to anarchistic teeny-boppers with partially shaved heads and multi-colored hair? I shook my head at the sheer injustice of it all.

Oprah excused herself for a commercial break. One of those loud Ronco commercials assaulted my senses with the following sales pitch:

Get the new and improved Ronco Anthology of Classic Literature! Voltaire, Shakespeare, Chaucer, Dickinson, Pound, Hughes! We've got black writers! We've got female writers! We've got writers up the kazoo and they're all yours for just $39.99! That's right, just $39.99! Buy now and get this priceless recording of the Andrews sisters doing the Bronte sisters—absolutely free! But wait, there's more! Buy all 37 volumes now and we'll send you the T.S. Eliot Guide to Confusion

and Insanity! Impress your friends! And that's not all! Order within the next ten minutes and I' ll send you something you really need—some ear plugs! So call now! 1-800-RIP-OFFF—that number again 1-800-RIP-OFFF!

Literature—bah. Who needs it? And who needs commercials like that? I contemplated these and other important issues (like Erica and Jeremy) as a mild-mannered Mid-Western housewife attempted to persuade me that, yes, Tide could indeed get those nasty grease stains out better than the other leading brand.

"I used to use that other brand until Tide showed me the way," she declared earnestly. "Don't let those other brands lead you astray."

Oprah returned and I soon found myself again engrossed in the trials and tribulations of the transvestite grave diggers.

"It's a hahd lahf," drawled "Bertha" in an accent thicker than cold grits, "but we git along raght enough—break allotuh nail tips an ruin allotuh hose—it all adds up."

"Do you get much community support?" an insignificant looking man with thinning hair parted just above the left ear timidly asked.

"Nope," answered "Melody," contempt welling up in his wavering voice, "'bout the only support we git is from our panty ho—"

Just then the screen went dead. My thumb impatiently pressed the power button. Nothing. I tried again. Still nothing. I panicked. Like a hysterical mother hen, I clucked and I cackled and picked at my TV. I checked the plug. I jiggled the buttons. I adjusted the rabbit ears. Nothing worked. Nothing. I let myself drop to the floor and landed with a dull thud. My emotions tottered on the edge of night. My upper lip trembled uncontrollably. First *All My Children* ; now this. A single tear did a ski jump off my nose. I truly knew the agony of defeat.

I don't know how long I sat there in a tearful stupor—five minutes, an hour. My mind was a vacuum—nothing registered. I felt empty inside. Suddenly, a bright yellow object caught my eye. A bright beacon of hope pierced my gloomy fog of despair. I saw the light! The yellow pages! I'll call a technician! Yeah, that's what I'll do!

But before I could, the phone rang.

"Hello?"

"Miss McGraa?" that voice—it sounded strangely familiar.

"Yes?"

"Having technical difficulty with your TV?"

"Who is this?" I demanded. Fear and dread, dressed like the grave diggers in spiky heels, crept up my spine and slowly began to dig graves at the base of my neck.

"I know someone who will fix it for free," continued the Voice.

"Oh? Who?"

"Wilke Collins." Click. I heard nothing but dial tone.

Paranoia gripped my shoulders with bony fingers and shook me senseless. Who was that? Some prankster, no doubt. Probably dials 976 numbers without parental permission. But that voice—where had I heard it before? How did he know about my TV? And just who is this Wilke Collins person? How much does he charge? Can I find him in the yellow pages? The phone rang again.

"Hello?"

"You can't find him in the yellow pages. Check the library." Click.

The library—I almost gagged. I detest libraries. I abhor anything that has anything to do with (pause for dramatic effect) reading. Why read books when we have TV? Look at *Roots*; look at *Thornbirds*. TV producers package books very neatly into prime-time miniseries and it only takes a few hours to watch. It could take days, weeks, even months to read just one book.

Yet the sad fact remained that I had no TV. I had to do something, and fast. An eternity loomed ahead of me—and the thought of living without my TV, without *All My Children*—well, it scared the hell out of me. I couldn't risk it. I had no choice. Like a beaten dog, I slouched my way to the nearest library.

A thin shiver tingled down my spine as I asked the information lady, a thin, evil looking grey-haired woman with a big black mole on her chin, for directions to the card catalogue.

"It's over there," she droned, lifting a gnarled hand slowly and pointing to the lobby.

Three hours later, I found it. My fingers flipped quickly through the "C" drawer. "Coleman. ... Coleridge. ... ah, Collins, Wilke." Imagine the shock when I discovered this Wilke Collins person is a Victorian novelist, not a TV repairman. I firmly resolved to untangle this growing web of deceit and confusion even if it took the rest of my life—

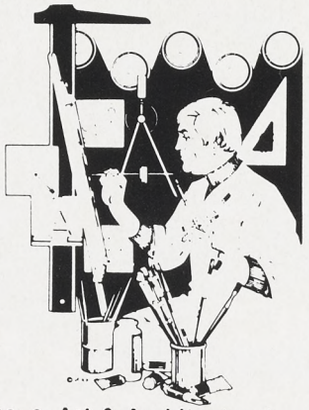


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or at least until my TV, my sustenance, my life force, my guiding light, got fixed.

I hurriedly scribbled the call numbers into my organizer and journeyed deep into the bowels of the library. The call numbers led me to a dank, damp and deserted corner. The musty smell turned my stomach. The grave diggers were hard at work on the back of my neck again. I just grabbed a book and ran. I didn't care. I had to get out.

My heart pounded. I drove like a maniac. I didn't notice the truck until it was almost too late. I swerved sharply to avoid rear-ending it. "Pull over! Pull over!" a little voice kept screaming in my head. I did. I sat there and breathed deeply. I glanced at the book, eyeing it with fear and trepidation.

"You have to do this," my voice shook. I tried to persuade myself, "You have to take the risk. You only have one life to live. Do it for Erica and Jeremy.

I heaved a sigh and drove home. I plopped wearily down in my bean bag chair, my nest and my prison. I looked at the book and then my TV. I sat there, motionless, hesitating, afraid, nay, terrified to take the plunge. The phone rang.

"Hello?"

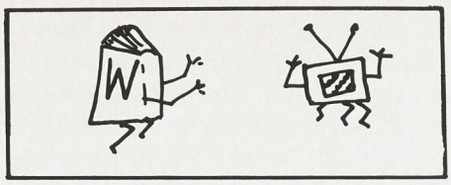
"So what are you waiting for? Start reading!" Click.

I armed myself with junk food and alcohol and locked the door. What if the neighbors found out? I pulled the shades, cautiously opened the book and began to read.

Forty-eight hours, a case of beer and 492 pages later, I unlocked the door and let the shades up. I read the whole book. Not one word even alluded to TV repair. Instead, Collins fascinated me with lust, greed, mystery, intrigue, suspense and murder—and it all happened in my own head. I wondered what I'd been missing out on all these years.

I tore open a bag of Cheetos and munched thoughtfully. The very fact that I immensely enjoyed a Victorian novel shocked, even astounded me. I, like so many other naive fools, had wrongfully embraced the misconception that all literature must be tedious, esoteric, and fraught with endless compound and complex sentences.

"Maybe I should look into this read-



ing thing—just as a hobby," I thought. The phone rang.

"Hello?"

"Miss McGraa?"

"We've got to stop talking like this," I told the Voice.

"Miss McGraa, your number has been randomly selected and I am ecstatic to say that you have been chosen out of millions of Americans to receive the Ronco Anthology of Classic Literature absolutely free!"

"I have?" I couldn't believe my ears.

"Yes! You can have this literary marvel delivered directly to your home—you don't have to lift a finger, Miss McGraa. Ronco does it all for you."

"Where do I sign?" Mr. Ronco gave me all the information and two hours later, there was a knock on the door.

"Miss McGraa? I'm from Ronco, here with all 37 volumes of the Ronco Anthology of Classic Literature. Where do you want it?"

"Just put them there in the corner—here, let me move those newspapers." I threw the papers into the fireplace.

I noticed the delivery man looking at my TV. "Would you happen to know anything about TV repair?" I asked, just in case.

"As a matter of fact, I used to work in the Ronco TV Department."

What a happy coincidence! "Do you think you could take a look at mine? It just stopped working."

He strode across the room to my TV. He took off the back panel and rummaged around for a few seconds. "Hmmmm. Ohhhhh. Ah-haaaa!"

"Well?" I asked, "what's the problem?"

"There seems to be a plastic bean lodged in the picture tube," he explained, somewhat perplexed. "Wouldn't happen to know how it got there, would you?" ✎

Teresa McGraa will be graduating soon with a BA in intellectual facetiousness.

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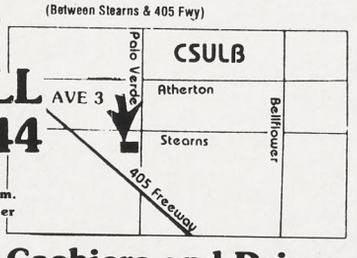
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TUNE IN

Continued from page 29

dog, or your cat jumps on your chest and hisses hidden meanings in *Hamlet* through translucent spheres of velvet neon steam, you can attempt to deal with the fact that it's not real. But when you're stone-cold sober, soaring like a cheap kite infinite distances from your body, held to it by what looks like a section of dental floss, you begin to realize what *high* really means.

The first *real* astral flight is enough to send Rambo crawling in bawling hysterics for his army-issue security blanket. It sure scared the hell out of me! But it's an exhilarating, adrenaline-pumping fright, like being 12 years old and shoplifting a Snickers from 7-11, or 15 and a half and getting pulled over in dad's Volvo, whacked out on mescal and quadro-boost amphetamine, and passing the drunk test. You feel numb for days afterwards. I found myself staring milky-eyed into empty cat bowls. It's an experience deserving so much more than a description by mere words. It's a rollercoaster scream to the universe's end, where your head is peeled back like a ripe grapefruit and *pure freedom* rushes in.

After the initial fear subsides, projection becomes a fun-filled adventure, a cost-free video game. But astral projection has a few things going for it that Space Invaders just can't match. For one thing, you feel great afterwards. Some spiritualists believe your soul needs to vacate your body and go hang out wherever it is souls hang out at. Sid thinks there's a cosmic cocktail lounge somewhere with a dynamite happy hour.

Weeks later during one of our all-night, gin-and-tonic-and-more-gin, *On The Road*-type discussions about life, Sid proposed the idea that I experience past life regression. Past life regression, as the name implies, is a return, through a hypnotic trance, to the lives one's lived before. Believers in karma use it to find out where they are in relation to where they've been, and to help discover what their present life is meant to accomplish.

"It's the only way you're gonna be able to get a handle on all this," said Sid. I told Sid that my body demands large quantities of chemicals just to handle the pressure of Southern California life, and that the added guilt-related stress which this experience could evoke might send me into a mental state which neither my meager wages nor flimsy Santa Ana connections would withstand.

"What if I find out I was some kind of Nazi scumbag who barbecued busloads of innocent shopkeepers?" I asked. "Or what if I'm the guy who invented aluminum siding! Or what if. . . ."

"Calm down," Sid ordered, "you're gonna have a psychotic episode for nothing. . . now listen, karma would not allow you to become the model of success you are today if you'd been such a vile slug in a past life."

"Right!" I said, after I stopped hyperventilating, "I've got a Montgomery Wards charge card, for Christ's sake, I'm covered!"

"Exactly," said Sid, "if you had been such a sleazebag, you would have come back as a self-tortured psychopath, a quadriplegic mental vegetable or a Republican."

"You're right, God dammit," I exclaimed, with a new-found vigor for life. "Where do I sign up!"

While this exercise has reportedly helped some people in their spiritual search, I had a bit of trouble with it. It was quite difficult for me to believe that in the 1500's, I was a fat Portuguese nun; especially since I've spent half my adolescent life driving around in cars sticking my bare ass out at them.

"It's time for the ultimate spiritual experience," Sid told me. "It must have been fate that brought you to journalistically search out spirituality at this particular point in time."

"What the hell are you babbling about?" I asked.

"The Harmonic Convergence," he said. "It's the end of the ancient Mayan calendar and the official start of the Age of Aquarius. Everybody's going to spiritually powerful places to think good thoughts at sunrise, and usher in the New Age on a positive note."

"When and where?" I asked.

"August 17th in Laguna Beach."

It was very strange, I thought, that the celebration of the Harmonic Convergence was being held just up the hill from the Taco Bell where Sixties' guru Timothy Leary dealt LSD and preached his hippy rhetoric. Tune in, turn on and drop out, he told the kids back in the 1960s; and here we were driving down to welcome in the age the 5th Dimension sang about.

We charged down the freeway in Sid's VW bus, loaded up with sleeping bags, four cases of Schaefer, Bananadine, a bunch of silica rocks, seven highly excited New Age kooks, and me. Moon Child explained that there would be a special star formation which made this day unique.

"That's great," I said, "but will there be any food?"

We arrived and impatiently waited for the sunrise and the beginning of the Aquarian Age. An electric excitement animated the group, ranging from two-hour face-splitting smiles to fits of crying. As the sun poked its orange head over the Earth's edge, and I finished off the last Schaefer, we were all inundated with a hysteric sense of happiness. Sid turned to me with a grin and asked, "So what do you think of our New Age?"

What indeed? Putting aside the delegitimizing commercialism of the Shirley "project-out-through-the-sunroof-of-a-Mercedes" MacLaine, two-column-ads-in-the-Yellow-Pages-type of spiritualism, there are pockets of undeniable New Age authenticity. At *this* point, however, rather than a New Age, it appears to be more a resurrection of an old one : The Sixties. But it's the Payless version. They've dug up the peace sign, the beads and the crystals, but there's no Hendrix, Morrison, or Dylan; no sit-ins, anti-oppression demonstrations or radical underground press. When comparing the Eighties Aquarian Age to that of the Sixties, it's kind of like buying Sees candy and just getting the box.

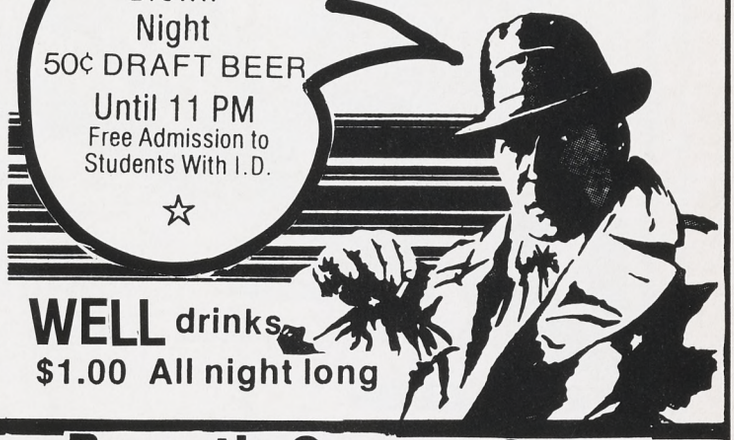
Only time will tell if the New Age finds its own voice. Until then all we soul-searching hepcats can do is tune in, turn on, and dig out mom's old tie-dyed shirts. ✎

Bruce Fordyce is a neo-spiritualist who only leaves his body to float down to AM/PM to score a sixer and some smokes.

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Scared Silly *Continued from page 33*



touched down with 15 of my closest friends.

"Let's go! Move out!"

Strolling down tastefully subdued green corridors, up ramps and around dorms we finally reached an oasis, another cell.

"Shut up. Give these cards to an orderly who will fill them out for you. No talking if you want a bed tonight!"

Silence, slam,click.

Cigarettes came out after the orderlies sold them to us. Smoke soon settled around the group like a suffocating shawl, and for the next hour we moved from line to cell to line to cell.

At about 2:30 a.m. we received one scratchy blanket and a flat pillow and were channelled into a large dorm room. Even at that early hour of the morning there was tremendous noise. The television blared in the corner, lights glowed from above and guys milled around from bunk to bunk.

Grabbing my arm, Don led me through the crowd, searching for two beds. We observed one unoccupied—Don made himself at home. I pushed a mattress between Don's and another's bunk, and collapsed.

"Mark, listen to me. Don't take your shoes off or they'll be just a memory in the morning."

"Great," I said. "At least I'll die with my Nikes on."

"Put your money and booking papers in your boxers."

Don had been with me through every phase so I wasn't surprised or offended when he called my underwear. I didn't care anymore. My pants had clung to my ankles more times than Gary Hart's during his presidential bid.

Sprawled out with the blanket askew, I glanced over to the adjacent guard room. The guard kept an eye on us. His other eye read the sports page. I hadn't slept in over a day, nor relieved myself, but no matter. Rest was the only thing that mattered. I drifted off to sleep to the tune of guys singing "Homeboy" drumming into my head.

"4653654! Mark Mulqueeney. You're being released."

"Wha..? Huh?" I yawned. "Me? They want me?! I must be dreaming."

"Hey Parisboy, that means you!"

Rocketing off the mattress with the speed of a scalded rabbit and the agility of a drunk turtle, I stumbled to the window.

"You're being released. Grab your belongings."

I ran back to Don. I said goodbye to my guardian angel, promising him a Paris postcard. He smiled broadly, eyes twinkling. I felt good for the first time in over a day.

I raced through the door, flew down the ramps and into the laundry area. With my clothes cleaned, I changed in the warmth of a small cell, discovering the loss of a shirt. I could care less. I just wanted out. I wanted freedom. I wanted a cup of coffee. I needed a bathroom.

Finally, the time came to pass the last door, the biggest obstacle, the Final Frontier. Spockface, a cling-on guard, pushed a button and I beamed my body out.

Stepping into the 6 a.m. sun, I sighed a breath of relief as my brother swung the car around. Dropping to the paint spattered pavement, I did my Pope imitation and kissed the cement.

"Sum bali dane day," I christened the ground, "I'm free!"

I melted into the soft leather seat. "Mike, let's go have breakfast, I'll buy."

Laughter and crying mixed in the Saab as we rode into downtown Los Angeles, searching for a diner.

"Hey Mark, tip included?"

"As long as you don't get anything green." ✎

Mark Mulqueeney was arrested on his way home from Paris—his last words were "but I'm going to LA!"

Tarcher

Continued from page 26

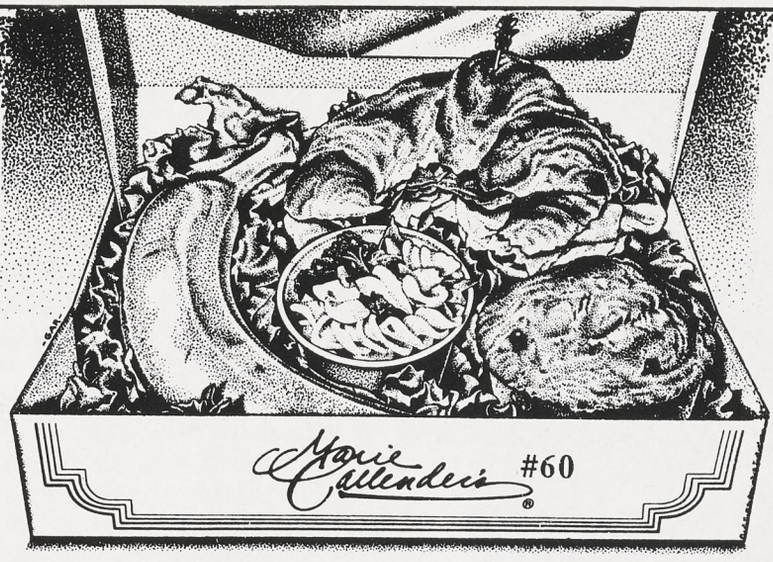
wondrous, creative tool and that we all have access to knowledge greater than we suppose, perhaps some kind of encoded knowledge. Perhaps we even have access to some general mind-at-large. But to explain channelling by referring to discarnate entities or alien space people seems to me to answer the how of channeling by relying on even greater mysteries.

I don't choose to answer the questions that way. I understand that some have had experiences which they interpret in that way; for me, they have had an hallucination which they understand to have been reality. Not every hallucination is real, some are simply hallucinations. As Freud is reputed to have said, "Sometimes a cigar is a cigar." You and I both know a lot of New Age people. Some of them are very unbalanced personalities. The fact that they would hallucinate and aggrandize is not at all surprising. Very, very few people I respect believe in the more fringy elements of the New Age. You do not find George Leonard, and many, many others I could name, with these far-out belief structures. Of course, some very respectable people have odd beliefs. Some day I may share them, but I don't now.

UM: What advice do you give college students about reaching their full human potential?

TARCHER: There is no single piece of advice for all college students, but I would address myself to those students who are interested in the issues of spiritual development and personal growth. I would say to them that the path goes uphill and downhill; be prepared for both. Pursue a program of reading and discussion of the things you care about in a community of like-minded friends who can support your growth. Develop a real sense of what is quality and what is not. Watch out for your own ego. It's the same advice I would like to think has been offered by vastly wiser people than myself for thousands of years. ✎

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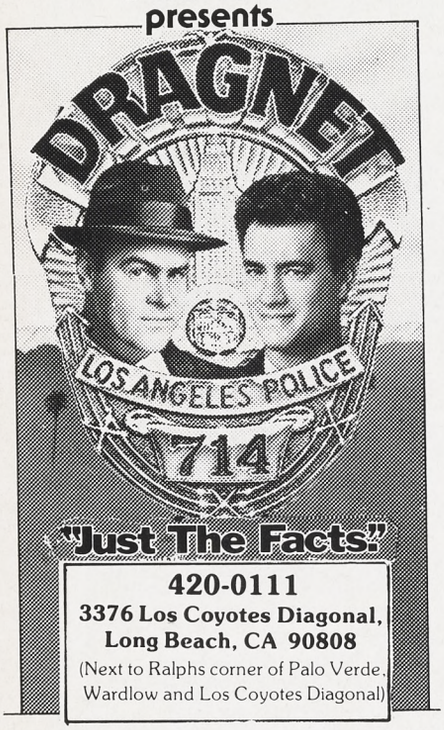
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Rude Awakening

Continued from page 7

petizing advice.

Our days were a continuous conflict. If we wanted a cigarette, we had to argue with our guards; if we wanted a cup to drink from—anything you can think of—we had to argue with our guards. To get the guard's attention required an incessant pounding on the steel-slatted wood door. They took pleasure in ignoring us; showing us they had the power. I gave up hope of ever reaching a human being inside a guard uniform.

This ongoing rhythm of frustration was breached only once. The guard on duty one Sunday, Oliver, led us to a strange room—the TV room. He unshackled us, turned the television on and sat down with us. For over an hour, we shared the thrill of the championship Lakers-Celtics game—I almost forgot I was in prison.

Such brief moments don't last long. Our only window, a small porthole in the door, rarely opened and then only for the business of passing in our daily ration of stomach-rotting beans and the rare cup of rancid coffee. If we were lucky we would have the chance to push our heads out and peer down the corridor at all the other faces protruding out of doors; like horses' heads in a stable. Such a small glimpse of the outside relieved the monotony of staring at the same four walls day-in, day-out, but was no consolation.

After one week of this life, a guard came to my door and said, "You've got five minutes to get ready—your lawyer is here." Brian, my good friend and attorney, is here? I couldn't believe it. Finally, I would learn what was going on. Questions flooded my mind. How could we have been held for so long without seeing the inside of a courtroom? Why were we being treated so severely?

As I walked down the aisle to the conference room, my spirits were so high I couldn't even feel the 45 pounds of lead weighing me down. As the window at the end of the hall came into view, I struggled to remain calm. But as soon as I could see Brian's face pressed tightly against the glass, my steps quickened. The slight smile on my face widening into a cheek splitting grin. But Brian was indignant. "Can't we get these things off his arms and legs," referring to my shackles. It was good to hear a concerned voice, and better yet, to hear Brian's sharp tongue lashing out at the guards. I knew then that everything would be all right—it was only a matter of time. ✎

Michel Shehadeh was detained, along with 2 other CSULB students, for 23 days on suspicion of terrorism. His trial will be held in the jurisdiction of the Federal INS Appellant Court. A local court recommended the charges be dropped. The government's case against Michel is based on the McCarthy Era McCarren-Walter Act (1952), which allows the specious deportation of immigrants. If Michel loses he faces deportation.

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Tired of Flats

By Michele Corella

Tired of term papers and studying for midterms, I decided to let my hair down. A group of friends and I decided to meet at the local dance club at 9:00 pm. I was so excited that I set out on a shopping spree. I bought everything from new earrings to new nylons. I knew this was going to be a night to remember; a night that would be hard to forget. Leaving my apartment building, I noticed my left rear tire was flat. I couldn't call for help because my phone was disconnected and no one was around. So I did the job myself.

The notion of dismounting a deflated tire had never before crossed my mind. Rummaging through my car, I searched for my owner's do-it-yourself manual. I frantically read the section entitled "In Case of Emergency." Since my car is a mid-engine sportscar, all materials required to change a flat are located in the front. When I opened the hood, everything was battened down. The emergency book told me to unscrew the number 1 and 2 handscrews to remove the bar securing the spare. Then by loosening numbers 3 and 4, I could gain access to the jack and number 5 would free the nut wrench. Okay. I can handle working by numbers.

Wait—there's one slight problem—none of the handscrews are numbered. So I do what any rational person would do—unscrew anything and everything that turns. I'm in control now and ready to hoist my car.

The instructions for jacking the car are as easy to grasp as the Theory of Relativity. "Attach the jack groove head to the rocker flange notch and position the leg 4.6 inches below notch!" Arrgh!

After two hours of studying the book, I finally figure out where the jack goes. Now I'm supposed to operate the jack in a "smooth clockwise motion." Jerky is more like it. How can this manual expect a tiny five-footer to "smoothly" raise two tons of fiberglass with a toy-sized jack?

At last I succeed in hoisting the car an inch off the ground. It is time for me to

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start dismounting the tire. I place the gizmo that loosens and tightens nuts—the lug wrench—on the lug nuts. Placing a firm grip on the wrench and counting to three, I give a big pull. The bolts are so tightly fastened, not only does the wrench turn counterclockwise, but so does the casing—and me along with it. Not a pretty sight.

I out-maneuvered the nuts and was all set to remove the radial. Squatting like a sumo wrestler primed for battle, I envelope the 35-pound tire. At that very moment, my nose begins to itch unbearably. Since my hands are occupied, I really have no choice but to press the tire against my nose. It stopped the itching, but my face is covered with black Armoral residue. Giving two big pulls, the tire would not budge. Maybe a good kick would do it? Giving it one last try, I put all 130 pounds of myself into it. Unexpectedly the tire let go and fell on top of me. The worst is over. After placing the spare on the empty cylinder, I load the deflated tire in my trunk.

This experience taught me two valuable lessons. First, everyone should know the fundamentals of repairing their cars. Secondly, always carry extra clothes just in case you find yourself in a sticky situation.

After my flat tire incident, determined to know more about my car, I searched for guidance. My quest unearthed the following: Cerritos Community and Long Beach City Colleges offer beginners classes in basic car maintenance and repair. Members in Southern California's Auto Club can attend free Car Care workshops. In Car Care I, basic engine operation and normal maintenance are covered. (No previous experience required.) More detailed instruction is provided in Car Care Class II. Subjects include: selecting the right tool for a particular job; inspecting and replacing batteries, filters, spark plugs and windshield wipers. For more information about car care classes check with your community service programs. Don't let yourself be caught with your tire down. ✎

Michele Corella, graduating soon with a BA in Journalism, has a slight case of paranoia.

Quantum Jump

Continued from page 30

escaped from Nazi Germany in the 1930s, he knew the hazards of the Aryan nihilism—Hitler's corruption of Friedrich Nietzsche's Superman philosophy.

He feared his theories would breed a society of Dostoyevsky-styled Raskolnikovs, manipulators with no ethical sense but that of their own promotion. In *Crime and Punishment*, Raskolnikov believes himself superior and kills his landlady; in Hitler's version, a conscienceless Superman would deify himself through technology.

The new theories, Einstein thought, must be wrong or incomplete, because they allowed too much room for chance and put man on too high a footing. "God doesn't shoot craps with the universe," he reputedly proclaimed, and set out to prove it.

In 1935 Einstein and Nathan Rosen separated particles in a twin particle chain. When the spin of one was changed, the other also switched. In 1972 Bell's Theorem followed up on this remarkable finding. When the particles were pulled apart and shot through filters, altering the polarity of one automatically altered the spin of the other. If you found that one was spinning clockwise, you could determine that the other would turn counterclockwise—an astonishing scientific discovery.

Einstein stumbled upon more connectedness than he expected, but he didn't eliminate the randomness factor. Nor did his view of a gambler's universe fan as much chaotic, anarchist fever as he imagined it would. Some Raskolnikovian manipulators might invoke relativism to bolster their pessimism, but the practice is not endemic.

Quantum physics and relativity did more than erect a temple to scientific sophistry and moral relativism. As Raskolnikov dreams in his epiphany, he both beats the horse and feels the pain, is both the horse and the one cracking the whip. ✎

Currently dodging casino debts in Acapulco, Brian Hall hopes to return to CSULB in the black.

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